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Victory for campaigning baronesses may bring division of assets when a marriage ends

Lords defeat pension rule for divorced

By ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

DIVORCING couples could be required to divide their pensions on the breakup of a marriage after an embarrassing defeat for the Government in the Lords last night.

Ministers strongly opposed the measure, saying it could cost the taxpayer £1.3 billion and cause legal and practical confusion. But after being rebuffed 178 to 150 by an alliance of Labour and rebel Tory peers, the Government appeared to be paving the way for a climbdown.

Ministers promised to take another look at the Opposition amendment and whips began taking soundings among Tory MPs. "There will be no snap decision," said a senior ministerial source. "We are quite sympathetic to what it is they are trying to do."

The £1.3 billion possible cost to the taxpayer, cited yesterday by Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, arises mainly from lost income tax revenues which might be partly offset by lower benefit payments.

With the Family Law Bill facing a barrage of criticism from right-wing Tory "family values" MPs, the Government might decide that with a majority of two it would be prudent not to risk further humiliation when the legislation is passed to the Commons after Easter.

During the debate, the Gov-

ernment urged peers to delay a decision until a consultation paper on splitting occupational pensions had been issued.

But, with the backing of influential business and professional groups, the alliance led by Baroness Hollis of Heigham, the frontbench Labour spokesman on social security, and Baroness Young, a former Tory leader of the Lords, won the day. Government critics claimed ministers had muddled their figures.

The change could affect 350,000 people a year. At present, pensions are divided between former partners on retirement, an arrangement that has led to much criticism and claims that women can be left virtually penniless.

Under the proposed arrangements, pensions would be treated like a family home, an asset to be divided at the time of a breakup.

Supporters said that divorcing couples should be allowed to sort out all their financial affairs immediately instead of being forced to negotiate with their former spouses again in old age when there might be other families with a claim on pensions. Divorced women and men would know exactly how much they could look forward to and when they would receive their pension.

Branding the amendment "emotional and ill-conceived", Lord Mackay of Ardbreck-

nish, Social Security Minister, told peers that it would have complex ramifications for not only those divorcing but also employers, other employees in occupational pension schemes, and the taxpayer. He said that there would be huge difficulties in splitting unfunded schemes, especially those in the public sector, and the taxpayer would have to pay.

"These schemes like the National Health Service, the teachers, the Civil Service are not funded — they, like the state scheme, work on a pay-as-you-go system. So there is no money in the kitty to draw on for transfers," he warned.

"If transfers out were allowed the costs would fall directly on the taxpayer and could be up to £500 million a year. For unfunded schemes in the private sector the costs would fall either on the employer or on members."

He also suggested that couples might go through a bogus divorce to get tax advantages on their new pensions.

Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish said if the same tax treatment — giving two tax allowances — was extended to the majority who remain married, then the immediate costs could be £600 million rising to £1.3 billion in the longer term.

Baroness Hollis said after-
Continued on page 2, col 6

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VICTOR PATTERSON



DAVID GADD

Matriarchs of the Marriage Mujahidin: Lady Young and her unlikely ally, Lady Hollis, hijacking Lord Mackay's divorce Bill

Lord is forced to bow to the Ladies

By ALICE THOMSON, POLITICAL REPORTER

THE two women in Lord Mackay of Clashfern's political life yesterday caused havoc with his plans for divorce, turning down his every offer of mediation.

The Lord Chancellor had been trying to introduce a modest little Bill in the House of Lords to help failing marriages. Instead he incurred the

wrath of two of the most powerful ladies in the gentleman's club on the Thames.

Baroness Young, the former Tory leader in the Lords, and Baroness Hollis of Heigham, the stunning Labour frontbench spokesman for Social Security, have joined forces to try to hijack the Bill with guerrilla tactics.

The Matriarchs of the Marriage Mujahidin make an unlikely pair. Lady Young,

nearly 70, is all tweeds, pearls and family values. Lady Hollis, 55, is the lycra-clad champion of the poor. But together Janet and Patricia have enlisted most of the women in the leather-bound Upper House to their cause and have enticed many of the male peers, bishops and law lords to vote against the Lord Chancellor.

Yesterday it was obvious that poor Lord Mackay did not stand a chance against the

amendment to split pensions at the time of divorce. The two women invoked images of frail women living in penury while their former husbands swanned around with their second wives. Porsches and swimming pools. They talked of honour and fairness. The lords were almost weeping.

Lady Young then went on to attack the very heart of Lord Mackay's Bill about no-fault divorces available to all after a

year. She is convinced that divorce is far too easy and causes havoc for the children. The Bill, she said, would harm many divorced women who have devoted their lives to bringing up a family. "Marriage is a contract and there are such things as obligations and responsibilities," she said.

Lady Young is inspired by old-fashioned idealism, has been married for 46 years in
Continued on page 2, col 5

Anti Status Quo

The rock group Status Quo are making a stand for pop music's elder statesmen by suing Radio 1 for £250,000 in damages after the station refused to play their records. The band has applied for a judicial review. Page 3

Newbury raid

Bailiffs accompanied by police staged an early morning raid to evict protesters from tunnels and treeops on the route of the Newbury bypass. The bailiffs were enforcing High Court eviction orders. Page 6

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West Indies humiliated by Kenyans

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN PUNE, INDIA

WEST INDIES, twice winners of the cricket World Cup, and for nearly 20 years the dominant force in the game, suffered the most humiliating defeat in their history yesterday when they were beaten by the amateurs of Kenya. The Africans won by 73 runs in Pune, and West Indies must now beat the favourites, Australia, to be sure of reaching the knock-out stage.

Maurice Odumbe, the Kenya captain, was man of the match after taking three wickets as West Indies were bowled out for 93, their lowest score in the competition. "For us, this is like winning the World Cup," said Odumbe. Apart from one professional, Steve Tikolo, Kenya's players are all amateurs — four salesmen, three students, a dentist,



"I'll be Kenya and you be West Indies"

a construction manager and an insurance broker. Peter Lever, the former England bowler, is their coach.

Their triumph was not even mentioned on Nairobi's main television news, perhaps because until a recent upsurge of interest by black Kenyans, cricket was considered the preserve of Asians and whites. Richie Richardson, the West Indies captain, is now almost certain to lose his job.

Match report, page 40

The Queen urges quiet divorce deal

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE QUEEN last night appealed for the Prince and Princess of Wales's divorce negotiations to be conducted amicably and quietly for the sake of their children.

The request follows the Princess's statement on Wednesday in which she agreed to the divorce but suggested that she had traded in her style of Royal Highness in return for staying on at Kensington Palace and full access to her children. Buckingham Palace denied that such details had been agreed.

Yesterday the Princess withdrew from an appearance at a British Red Cross reception at Lancaster House, central London.

First shots, page 8
Divorce deal, page 14
Bernard Levin, page 16

IRA refuses to yield to pressure for ceasefire

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT, AND PHILIP WEBSTER IN BANGKOK

HOPES of an imminent IRA ceasefire faded last night when the terrorist leadership accused Britain of placing preconditions on all-party negotiations.

As John Major intensified the pressure on Sinn Fein and the IRA to call a new ceasefire, the IRA's Army Council indicated that the Anglo-Irish communiqué did not go far enough for an immediate cessation of violence.

Mr Major, in Bangkok for an Euro-Asian summit, reacted furiously last night to the IRA's refusal to begin a new ceasefire in the wake of the London-Dublin agreement to set a starting date for all-party talks. Mr Major described the explanation for not announcing a ceasefire as "pathetic" and "a sick joke."

The Prime Minister said:

"For 25 years they have murdered and bombed. The majority of people in Northern Ireland will treat this statement with incredulity. The people in Northern Ireland will be fed up to the back teeth. It is time the IRA realised that democracy will go on with or without them." Earlier Mr Major had been sceptical about indications that a new ceasefire might be called.

The IRA made its first statement on the plans for all-party talks after holding secret meetings with Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president, and John Hume, the nationalist SDLP leader.

At their summit Mr Major and John Bruton, his Irish counterpart, met Sinn Fein's central demand to set a fixed date for all-party talks. However, republicans believe that

the agreement by the two Governments to hold elections in Northern Ireland is an unacceptable precondition.

The IRA insisted last night that the conflict in Ireland would only be resolved by "an inclusive negotiated settlement without preconditions".

Confirming that its leadership met Mr Hume and Mr Adams, the IRA said: "We pointed out [to them] that the failure by the British Government to put in place inclusive negotiations free from preconditions, the abuse of the peace process by the British over 18 months, and the absence of an effective and democratic approach capable of providing an irrevocable momentum towards a just and lasting peace in Ireland were the critical elements which led to this." Continued on page 2, col 8

TOMORROW IN THE TIMES

THE 100 MOST POWERFUL WOMEN IN THE WORLD

Part one in the Magazine PLUS
Weekend, 1015 for young Times readers, Weekend Money, Car 96, and Vision, the seven-day TV and radio guide
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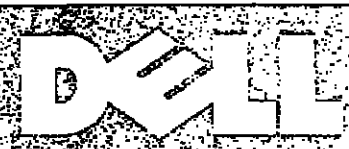
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Sir George's leap-year proposal gets Short shrift in loveless exchange

Sporadic attempts were made during Prime Minister's Questions in the Chamber yesterday to revive the Scott dispute, but the whoopee is over and MPs are bogged down and bored with it. As a former minister remarked recently (I hear) to a colleague, "what looked like a killing field has turned into a paddy field". MPs squelched around without much enthusiasm for a few minutes, then moved on.

Holding the fort while John Major is in Bangkok, Mich-

ael Heseltine had arrived for the session sporting an altogether new hairstyle. It is quite extraordinary. Gone is the casually tossed-back golden mane; in its place a brutal, ash-toned, lacquered creation, more like a pewter helmet than hair. It boasts big mud-guard-like flaps, sweeping back over the ears. The whole thing appears to be totally rigid. What can this mean?

Mr Heseltine's performance proved less interesting than his hair. John Prescott had nothing to ask, Heseltine

had nothing to reply, and both of them mithered on at each other joylessly for a few minutes, then packed it in. The Liberal Democrats' Paul Tyler (N Cornwall), a man with an accent so reminiscent of a 1950s BBC World Service continuity announcer that the strains of *Lilliburlero* can almost be heard as he speaks, asked Heseltine when a Tory minister had last resigned on a matter of principle. Heseltine mentioned Lord Carrington, who resigned as Foreign Secretary

after the Falklands invasion. "And the last Liberal?" chorused the Tories. I am unable to discover. In the 1920s Lloyd George, as Prime Minister, raised millions for Liberal funds by selling — on the open market — peerages, knighthoods and other honours, inventing the OBE to fill a marketing niche.

He did not resign. Horatio Bottomley, another Liberal MP, swindled the public of millions and ended up with a seven-year prison sentence. But he was not a minister: there have been so few since the Great War. We may summarise the modern Liberal record in these matters as one of turpitude tempered by im-

potence. After PM's Questions came a statement on the high-speed Channel Tunnel rail link from Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary. Tall, thin, bespectacled, balding and mild, Sir George ("the bicycling baronet") is almost painfully polite. Clare Short, Shadow Transport Secretary, is his opposite number in every sense: stocky and volcanic with a mop of raven hair. Ms Short would make a fearsome scrum-half in a women's rugby team. Young said the public were

getting excellent value, the work would proceed fast, and the whole strategy was a triumph for rail privatisation. Short said the public were being cheated of £5 billion, the plans were years late, and the whole scheme was a massive ideological cock-up by the Tories. It is amusing to imagine Sir George and Ms Short married to each other: a marriage made in hell. Picture Sir George coming down to breakfast: "Lovely day, dear." "Lovely day? You lie-a-bed

fathead. It was. Clouds everywhere now. Shouldn't be surprised if it pours." "Toast, my love?" "Not if you're making it, you bald, bicycling, owl-faced toff. The toaster's a deathtrap. You'll either electrocute yourself or burn the toast. Anyway, the bread's mouldy..." It will not surprise you to learn that George and Clare failed to reach agreement on the merits of the Government's plans for the Channel Tunnel rail link: or on anything else.

Branson consortium gets £1.4bn to build tunnel rail link

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is to give £1.4 billion to a private consortium, including Richard Branson's Virgin Group, to build the Channel Tunnel rail link. Labour described the sum as the "mother of all sweeteners".

The long-delayed 68-mile link is scheduled to be built by 2003, a decade after the French completed their high-speed line from the tunnel to Paris. Glenda Jackson, Labour's transport spokeswoman, said: "The taxpayer is being forced to hand over the biggest sweetener since Hansel and Gretel discovered the cottage."

The £3 billion link, the biggest rail project in Britain since the Victorian heyday of railway building, will allow Eurostar trains to reach their top speed of 186mph on both sides of the Channel. They cannot exceed 70mph in England because of the dilapidated state of the line.

Announcing the deal in the Commons, Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, described it as "an excellent investment for the nation, since we estimate the benefits of the project to be worth around £6 billion".

The consortium, London and Continental Railways, will also be given a 999-year concession to run the loss-making Eurostar service and a portfolio of physical assets, including St Pancras and Waterloo stations, 120 derelict

acres north of St Pancras and land along the route of the link.

Sir George dismissed criticism from Labour that the route could have been started in the late 1980s and for far less money. He said the final route was much better and would lead to regeneration of the Thames Gateway area.

Clare Short, the Shadow Transport Secretary, said that the taxpayer was handing over £5.7 billion assets to a private company in return for only £1.4 billion of private funding. They included development land potentially worth £3 billion and the £1.2 billion value of European Passenger Services, the Government-owned company that runs Eurostar, she said.

She told MPs: "The taxpayer in Britain is paying a very high cost for the right-wing ideological obsessions of the Government."

Construction work on the link, which will run from St Pancras through east London and north Kent, will begin next year. The work is expected to create 5,000 jobs and the regeneration of the Thames Gateway area served by the link could create up to 50,000 jobs.

The link will reduce the journey time from London to Paris by 40 minutes to about 2½ hours. International stations will be built at Stratford in east London and Ebbsfleet, near the M25 Dartford bridge.

The Stratford Promoter Group said that an international station there would have "enormous transport potential for the whole of South East England".

A connection from the link to the east and west coast main lines will allow for direct services from the Midlands, the North and Scotland to Paris and Brussels. The Birmingham to Paris journey will take about 3½ hours.

South East commuter services will be allowed to use the link, reducing times from Ashford to London from 72 to 40 minutes and from Gravesend to London from 50 to 20 minutes.

Sir Derek Hornby, the chairman of London and Continental, yesterday promised "highly competitive prices" on Eurostar trains from April 1 when the group takes over. The lowest return prices to Paris and Brussels are likely to drop from £59 to as little as £40. He said Eurostar had been "a great success" that could be made profitable with more marketing and higher public awareness.

Mr Branson said that he intended to make the service "the best in the world". He added: "Eurostar will be a tremendous challenge. We plan to turn it into the best train service in the world and we will give short-haul airlines, the ferries and the coach companies a serious run for their money."



Sandra Howard, left, wrote to Peter Thurnham and his wife Sarah, right

Howard's wife wrote letter in admiration for defecting MP

By KATE ALDERSON AND JAMES LANDALE

THE wife of the Home Secretary wrote without her husband's knowledge to Peter Thurnham, who resigned the Tory Whip last week, expressing her "bottomless well of admiration" for the Bolton North East MP.

The letter to Mr Thurnham and his wife Sarah — made public when faxed in error by Mr Thurnham's secretary to a local newspaper — was sent last Saturday, two days after he resigned. Sandra Howard urged him to "stay in the fold". She added: "That, I know, sounds ridiculous but we care

on personal grounds. I know how poorly you've been treated. It's monstrous. But it's not the fault of the whole body of Conservatives, sensible and honest and caring as the vast majority are."

This is believed to refer to a decision by Westmorland and Lonsdale Tories not to offer Mr Thurnham an interview when selecting a parliamentary candidate. Mr Thurnham, whose Bolton seat becomes solid Labour under boundary changes, lives in Westmorland and under Tory party rules would normally be given an opportunity for the seat. This, and his concerns over the Scott report, are the main reasons

why he resigned. The letter begins: "It's not an easy thing to write and Michael has no idea that I'm writing (and trying to defend the Government and the Party!) but he and I have such a bottomless well of admiration for you both and feel so desolate that you should have felt so badly as to not be able to stay loyal to a great and good party — and an honest and caring party at heart."

Mrs Howard does, however, back the Government's line on Scott, saying "there was no conspiracy or cover-up". The letter ends: "Forgive me for writing, with love, Sandra."

Weathergirl forecasts trouble and strife

A Yorkshire Television weather presenter yesterday proposed to her TV director boyfriend on air in front of millions of viewers. Steve Wright, 37, was watching as usual from studios in Leeds as Debbie Lindley, 22, went through her early evening bulletin. She began by announcing: "It is the last Leap Year Day before the end of the millennium." After telling viewers what weather was in store she said: "It's a special day when women are supposed to ask their men to marry them — so Steve Wright, I know you are watching. Will you marry me?" Mr Wright put his head in his hands and said: "You old dog, you baggage." He then added: "Was that going out?" He said afterwards: "It's been a really long day. I will give my answer somewhere more romantic."

Junior sport for all

Every primary-school child in England is to have access to sports equipment, coaching and facilities under a £14-million package. The National Junior Sport Programme will be introduced to 200 schools next month and will reach all 20,000 in England by 2000. The money comes from the National Lottery, sponsorship and the Sports Council.

Heseltine security scare

Security has been tightened at the London home of Michael Heseltine after a claw hammer, three military medals and a newspaper cutting about the Gulf war were thrown through a ground-floor window last Friday. One week earlier a suspected car bomb was found outside the Deputy Prime Minister's house in Belgravia.

Sick submariner airlifted

A Russian submariner suffering from acute appendicitis was airlifted to hospital by a Royal Navy helicopter last night after a Russian nuclear-powered "hunter killer" submarine surfaced off the Scottish coast to seek help. The rescue began after an appeal from Moscow was sent to the Ministry of Defence via the Russian embassy in London.

Legal aid robber on run

Steven Charalambous, the convicted armed robber granted legal aid to sue the police force that shot him, was being hunted by police last night after he fled from Holford Bay open prison in Suffolk on Wednesday night. Charalambous, 26, from Finsbury Park, north London, telephoned a newspaper to say he would hand himself in after three days.

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Ladies win

Continued from page 1
Oxford and has three happily-married daughters. She does not believe that the young should get away with "no pain, no shame, no blame on divorce".

She and Lady Hollis have received sackfuls of plaintive letters from men and women who have been left in the lurch just because they refused to screw back the toothpaste lid. "Some are heart-rending," said Lady Hollis.

Lady Young has a CV which is every bit as illustrious as Lord Mackay's. She played rugby at the Dragon School; Oxford, against the young Patrick Jenkin, among others. She read PPE at St Anne's. She was an Oxford City Councillor, and was made a life peer in 1971. She held five government jobs, including junior Foreign Office minister. Lady Hollis is an equally clever academic, also listens to Radio 3 and balances career, marriage and children with enviable ease from her home in Norwich.

She is as educated as Lord Mackay and far more glamorous. Tory peers, who dislike her breathless feminist tones, admit she is "a real cracker" with her flaming auburn hair, endless legs and luminous skin. Even peers with failing eyesight can see she is a thoroughbred.

She is also passionate about Tony Blair's new party and adept at winning over both recalcitrant old Labour and crusty rightwingers to her many causes. She was even credited with getting Alan Howarth, the caring Tory MP for Stratford-upon-Avon, to cross to the Labour benches.

Her background is very different to Lord Mackay's. Her parents both left school at 13 and her father was sacked as a farmworker in Devon by the lady of the manor for refusing to vote Tory.

Lady Hollis forged her way to a first at Cambridge. Then she attended an American university.

The two baronesses have got the Pensions Management Institute, the Confederation of British Industry, the Law Society, Age Concern and the National Association of Pension Funds on their side. Lord Mackay could only plead that the expense of the whole operation of pension-splitting would cripple him. Their lordships didn't listen.

IRA says bomber had struck before IRA rebuff

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

EDWARD O'BRIEN, the terrorist who blew himself up in the Aldwych bomb blast, took part in IRA attacks in London before the organisation's ceasefire in August 1994, the IRA claimed yesterday.

In an obituary of O'Brien two IRA colleagues claimed he "slipped into London unnoticed" two years ago. The unnamed colleagues said: "He remained anonymous, but his daring in carrying out attacks in the heartland of Britain's war machine did not go unnoticed."

The obituary, published in the Sinn Féin newspaper *Republican News*, did not specify which attacks O'Brien took part in. However, the timeframe suggests he may have been involved in IRA mortar attacks on Heathrow in March 1994 and the Bishopsgate bomb in April 1993. The obituary claimed that O'Brien, who was buried in his home town of Gorey, Co Wexford, on Wednesday, joined the IRA in 1992. It claimed that from a young age O'Brien wanted to join the movement in Gorey.

His IRA colleagues wrote: "He often spoke to republicans he met in Gorey and as a result a local Special Branch man visited his house. He also arrested Eddie and attempted to intimidate him."

The obituary sheds light on the IRA "sleepers" who quietly slip into England. O'Brien had no criminal record, which meant that he did not come to the attention of the police.

The obituary said: "In London Eddie blended in with his surroundings. Like thousands of other Irishmen he worked as a labourer. He lived in a bedsit, played in the pub football team and made friends of different ages."

It added that he took elaborate precautions to ensure that nobody in the house where he lived would have an inkling of his activities. It said: "While the war was at its height Eddie rarely left his flat, reading and listening to music."

The obituary claimed that he supported the IRA ceasefire in August 1994 but said that he argued forcefully in favour of ending the ceasefire towards the end of last year "when he came to the conclusion that the British would not leave Ireland unless the IRA went on the offensive again".

Lords say pensions should be split

Continued from page 1

"I am delighted that the Lords has agreed in principle to the splitting of pensions on divorce. This will save many divorced people from an old age in penury."

The Pensions Management Institute, the Confederation of British Industry, the Law Society, Age Concern and the National Association of Pension Funds welcomed the vote.

Many of the 80 women in the Lords were in the forefront of the defeat secured by 21 Tory rebels. Baroness O'Cathain, a Tory rebel and signatory to the amendment, said the move would "restore dignity and self-worth to people who are shattered by the experience of divorce".

Baroness Girdner of Parkes, president of the Married Women's Association and another Tory rebel, told she

IRA rebuff

Continued from page 1

failure, thus far, of the Irish peace process. The IRA reiterated its "absolute commitment to our republican objectives", which includes the right of the Irish people to determine their own future. The statement came as Mr Adams dampened speculation that his meeting with Mr Hume and the IRA would lead to an imminent ceasefire. Mr Adams said: "We have to have an end to all armed actions. If you are saying to me: 'Do I think that will happen tonight or tomorrow night or the next night I think it is most unlikely.'"

The comments by Mr Adams and the IRA statement will disappoint Mr Hume, who told the terrorists that there was no justification for their violence in the light of the Anglo-Irish commitment to hold all-party talks by June.

Observers in Belfast believe that Sinn Féin will attempt to maximise its position by recommending a ceasefire only once it has pushed the two Governments for concessions in areas such as ministerial talks. However, the IRA is facing intense pressure on both sides of the Irish border to restore its ceasefire. Dick Spring, Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister, said that there was no justification for IRA violence in the light of the Anglo-Irish communique.

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TECHNOLOGY TODAY.

WHO KNOWS WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?

THE OLIVER & CLAIRE STRIP

Detective admits accepting bribes in drug case

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

A SCOTLAND YARD detective was behind bars last night after admitting corruption charges involving bribes of £68,000 from a suspected drug dealer. The kickbacks were for destroying evidence and providing information.

Detective Constable John Donald, 27, was on secondment from the Metropolitan Police to the South East Regional Crime Squad at the time of the offences. He was arrested after a suspected dealer went to the BBC programme *Panorama* and secret film was taken. He disappeared for 24 hours after the film was shown but then gave himself up.

Donald, from Shepperton, Surrey, originally denied four charges of corruption but changed his plea yesterday, 60 days into his trial at the Old Bailey. He is the first Yard officer to be convicted of substantial corruption for many years.

Donald admitted accepting a total of £28,500 from a suspected dealer and planning to accept a further £40,000 in cash. The four charges were: taking £500 to provide information on police operations; in February 1993, taking £10,000 as an inducement to provide information on police operations on two alleged criminals in May 1993; agreeing to accept £40,000 for the removal and destruction of police logs between September 1992 and September 1993; and accepting £18,000 in the same period.

After he admitted his guilt he was remanded in custody. Mrs Justice Steel praised his courage for changing his plea, but refused him bail. Peter Cooper, QC, for the defence, said Donald realised that he could be facing a heavy prison sentence.

His co-defendant, from Dutton, Kent, denies possessing a Class B drug with intent to supply, five charges of corruption and one of perverting the course of justice between September 1992 and March 1993. He will be retried and Donald will be sentenced at the end of that retrial.



Trying to change the status quo: Jeff Rich, drummer; John Edwards, bass guitarist; Rick Parfitt, guitarist; Francis Rossi, guitarist; and Andrew Bown, keyboards

Veteran rockers sue 'ageist' Radio 1

BY JOANNA BAILE

THE rock group Status Quo are making a stand for pop music's elder statesmen by suing BBC Radio 1 for £250,000 in damages after the station refused to play their records.

The band, which celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year, has even applied for a judicial review to focus on Radio 1's policy of banning chart hits by "unfashionable" artists despite a remit to play Top 40 music.

Sir Cliff Richard, who has also been shunned by the station, is among those who might benefit from the legal challenge.

The action comes after three years of what the group claims is discriminatory treatment from Trevor Dann, 44, Radio 1's head of production, and Matthew Bannister, 37, the station's controller.

David Walker, Status Quo's manager, said the case was prompted by Radio 1's failure to play the group's new hit single *Fun, Fun, Fun*, recorded with the Beach Boys, which went straight into the Radio 1 chart at number 24 this week.

Francis Rossi, 46, a founder member of the group, said: "It could well be a bit of sour grapes, but it's a top-40 station and we get into the top 40 and they still don't play our records. We have been very successful and had a lot of hits. What we're asking for is fair treatment for us and other artists. Until Radio 1's remit is changed, its role is to play top-40 music."

Status Quo have had 50 hit singles and released 27 albums. Their current album *Don't Stop* has been in the top ten for three weeks. It was Radio 2's album of the week last week and the group is regularly featured on that station's playlist.

Rick Parfitt, the other original member, who at 47 is the same age as Prince Charles, said: "It has been said at Radio 1 that even if we get into the top five, they are still not going to play us." Mr Rossi added: "We are hoping that through this action other acts in this position will have a more favourable time. It's not about the money. I don't really think this action's going to help us at all. I don't think you'll ever hear Status Quo on Radio 1 ever again."

WHO'S IN AND OUT ON PLAYLIST

Radio 1's playlist is dominated by top-selling youth-oriented groups such as Oasis, Blur and Take That, as well as more obscure names like 99th Floor Elevators and Boo Hewerdine. The station said that all singles were considered on their merits. Recent artists who have made the playlist include David Bowie, The Rolling Stones, Queen, Simply Red, Paul Weller, Bon Jovi, Whitney Houston and Van Morrison. Big-selling artists who have not featured for some time include Cliff Richard, Rod Stewart, Barry Manilow, The Beach Boys and Elvis Presley.

According to Mr Walker, Status Quo does not depend on Radio 1 for its success. He said: "Our application for a judicial review is based on the belief that every record of every artist should be given fair consideration and that Mr Dann is abusing his power by unilaterally declaring that Status Quo do not suit the demographic of Radio 1's audience."

It is our understanding, and that of our industry, that Radio 1 is the nation's top-40 station, paid for by the British public.

"These people are not paid to be tastemakers and trend-setters. They are there to provide a music service and it does not matter whether they do or do not like Status Quo records, their role is to play top 40 music and as Status Quo are in the top 40 it is their job to play it."

Radio 1 said in a statement: "Unlike everyone else, Status Quo don't seem to have noticed that there have been a few changes at Radio 1 in the past couple of years. We are now the UK's leading contemporary music station and our main aim is to play the best new music and support the development of new artists. We do not slavishly follow the Top 40."

There have been a number of occasions in the past two years where we have not played records that were in the charts. These have included Mr Blobby, Michael Barrymore, Michael Ball, Robson & Jerome and Cliff Richard. Records are chosen on merit to be included in the Radio 1 playlist."

Status Quo headlined Radio 1's birthday party at Sutton Park, in Sutton, West Midlands, in 1992, but since then the station has undergone a transformation to lure younger listeners. Chris Evans, hailed as the station's saviour, was brought in to present its breakfast show last April with an eight-month contract worth £1.2 million, making him the highest paid radio or television presenter.

During his two years in charge of the station, Mr Bannister has sacked some of its most famous disc jockeys, including Simon Bates and Dave Lee Travis, and has suffered the loss of five million listeners. However, recent audience figures of 11.2 million suggest a slow recovery is under way.

Father is jailed for punching underwear thief

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A FATHER was jailed yesterday for attacking a thief who stole his wife's underwear from a washing line. The thief was given only a caution.

Gary Titmus, who has five children, was sentenced to four months despite a petition signed by nearly 200 supporters. His wife, Sharon, 31, said: "Gary has been sent to prison for trying to protect his family. We were the victims and my husband has been turned into a villain."

Titmus, 32, saw Kevin Pitam near the washing line in his garden late at night, magistrates in Amptill, Bedfordshire, were told. He followed him to an alley next to his home in Flitwick, and hit him in the face. The prosecution said that Mr Pitam fell to the ground and Titmus hit him again, shouting: "I have caught the culprit."

Mr Pitam, 38, a supermarket worker, suffered a fractured cheek bone. About 15 items of women's underwear were found at his flat near by.

Mr Pitam admitted stealing underwear. He told the court: "I took it when I was drunk. I have been taught a lesson. I am not going to do it again."

Clifford Groves, for the prosecution, told the magistrates at an earlier hearing: "You may have sympathy for the defendant but... provocation is not a defence to any charge other than murder."

Titmus, who is unemployed, had denied causing grievous bodily harm last May. He told the court that in the past underwear belonging to his wife and daughters had been taken.

Before being sentenced Titmus said: "I was only thinking of protecting my family. Next time I will have to ask him in for tea and sandwiches. I have never been in trouble before and I did what I thought was right."

The petition described Titmus as a good family man and well-mannered. It went on: "We have all had things go missing from our washing lines and if we had caught Kevin Pitam we would have done the same to him as Gary. Titmus is to appeal."

West's lawyer suspended for his conduct on case

BY RICHARD DUCE

FREDERICK WEST's former solicitor was cleared by a tribunal yesterday of trying to cash in on the notoriety of the serial killer but was suspended for a year for bringing the profession into disrepute.

Howard Ogden said he would appeal against the sentence of the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal, which ordered him to pay half the hearing's estimated £5,000 costs.

Mr Ogden, 42, represented the Gloucester builder for five months after he was arrested on murder charges and was then sacked by West, who claimed in a statement read at the London hearing that all the lawyer wanted from him was information for a book.

Mr Ogden had persuaded West to sign a waiver releasing the solicitor from his duty of confidentiality. Mr Ogden denied he intended to benefit from the waiver but admitted he had been "a naive fool" in having it drawn up.

The solicitor had told the tribunal that it was West who had first mentioned to him the possibility of a book about his life story. West had also joked with Mr Ogden. Detective Constable Hazel Savage and Janet Leach, a volunteer, about a film version.

"WDC Savage was a dead ringer for Glenda Jackson. I was a shorter version of Danny De Vito. Janet Leach

was a Dawn French lookalike." West, who committed suicide at Winson Green Prison, Birmingham, on New Year's Day last year, said in a statement while awaiting trial on 12 murder charges that he had chosen Mr Ogden to represent him because he had known him before.

Mr Ogden described himself as "a hack defensive brief" who before the West case had simply been "an obscure bottom of the high street lawyer".

The West statement said: "It became clear to me that Mr Ogden's main concern was to get information from me to provide material for a book and he was not concerned with my defence. I was never given the opportunity for separate advice. He was more interested in his own interests than mine and I eventually



Ogden: cleared of trying to cash in

decided to change solicitors."

He said that he was visited by Mr Ogden in his cell at Winson Green when he saw a "postcard size" contract in his briefcase. West said he signed it because Janet Leach was in the cell and said it was the right thing to do.

Mr Ogden broke down in the witness box as he admitted that he made errors in dealing with the confidentiality contract. "Fred was anxious that what he described as 'the truth' was told. It was his way of relieving the horror of the case," he said.

But the solicitor told the hearing that he had always acted in the best interests of his client, even to the point of washing his underwear while he was in Winson Green awaiting trial.

David Swift, for the law society, asked Mr Ogden why he was in possession of a drinks cabinet from the Cromwell Street address in Gloucester and a suit which belonged to West. He said that when it was decided to lock up the house, many items of furniture were under threat of being destroyed and West had asked him to look after them.

The Law Society brought its action against Mr Ogden after a report in the *Daily Mail* in August 1994 that he was touting West's story around publishers for £1 million. The tribunal held that that was not substantiated.

Son's killers 'should not be hanged'

THE mother of a murder victim said last night that she did not believe that his killers should hang. Marvin Joseph and Mellanion Harris, both 23, have been found guilty of four charges of murder and sentenced to death in Antigua.

They were convicted of the killings on a yacht in the Caribbean of an American couple, William and Kathleen Clever, and their British crew, Ian Cridland and Tom Williams, both from Southampton. Mr Williams's mother said that she was pleased at the verdicts but did not believe in capital punishment.

Beverly Williams, 48, of Southampton, said: "That is the law of the land, that is the sentence they get for that crime, although I personally don't believe in hanging. It doesn't bring Tom back or the three other people. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth doesn't move society on."

"My feeling is, if they spent 30 years in jail that is a far greater penance. It is something they live with for the rest of their lives. They miss out on vital years of their life."

Mrs Williams and her husband John, an officer on cross-Channel ferries, spent a week in Antigua attending the trial and visiting the spot where their son died. The four victims were shot at close range on the *Computacentre Challenger* when it was anchored off Barbuda in 1994.

Court clears bottom-branding husband

BY BILL FROST

THREE appeal judges yesterday overturned a husband's conviction for scarring his initials into his wife's buttocks with a hot blade and said the case should never have come to trial.

They ruled that Alan Wilson was not guilty of assault and suggested that his counsel should make an application for costs against the Crown Prosecution Service. The "branding", carried out at the request of Mr Wilson's wife, Julie Ann, was no more hazardous than acquiring a tattoo and was regarded by the couple as external evidence of their mutual love, the court was told.

Mr Wilson, 38, of Thorne, South Yorkshire, was convicted of assault causing actual bodily harm last May and

conditionally discharged for 12 months.

Lord Justice Russell, with Mrs Justice Bracewell and Judge Stroyan, said: "Sexual activity between husband and wife in the privacy of the matrimonial home is not, in our judgment, a matter for criminal investigation, let alone criminal prosecution." They said Mrs Wilson regarded the presence of the initials on her bottom, one on each cheek, as "a desirable personal adornment".

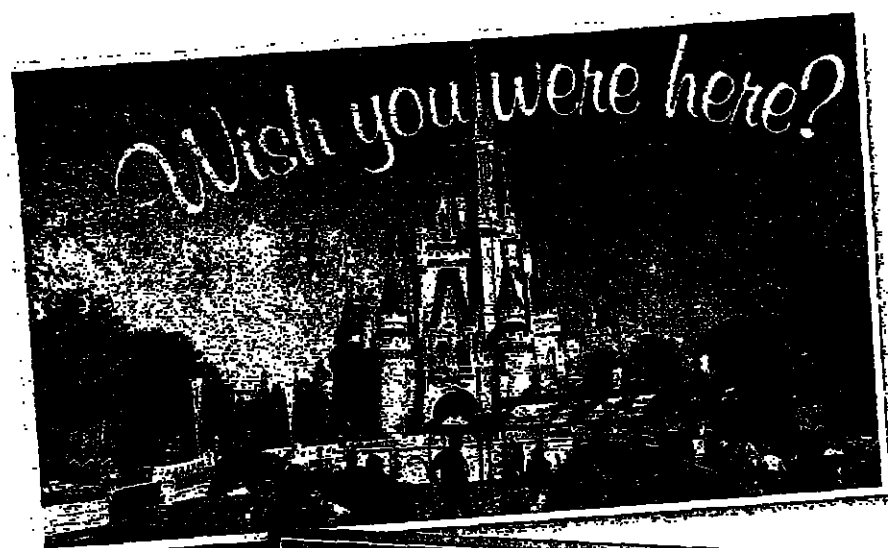
The trial judge at Doncaster Crown Court had failed to have full regard to the facts of the case and misdirected himself on the law, they ruled. The prosecution "had served no useful purpose at considerable public expense".

In a statement last night, the Crown Prosecution Service said: "The prosecution was carefully considered and re-

viewed in accordance with the code for criminal prosecutors and our understanding of the current law and in the light of medical reports received."

Mr Wilson told police after his arrest that his wife had originally requested that he place the inscription on her breasts. "I talked her out of this because I didn't know how to do it. Then one of us hit on the idea of using a hot knife on her bum and she said 'I'm not scared of anybody knowing I love you enough to have your name on my body.'" The matter came to light when Mrs Wilson's doctor reported the "branding" to the police. The Court of Appeal was told.

Lord Justice Russell said the case was easily distinguished from those where real torture had been inflicted. Costs were awarded from central funds.



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Dunlop pays family £600,000 over crash caused by faulty tyre

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

DUNLOP yesterday agreed to pay nearly £600,000 compensation to a family of four involved in a car crash caused when a faulty tyre ripped apart, resulting in the death of a 12-year-old girl.

The Carroll family pursued Dunlop through the courts when they discovered that the company was aware of manufacturing defects to the SP4 radial up to seven years before their accident on the M4 near Swindon, Wiltshire, in 1988.

The SP4, one of the most popular tyres, was never recalled in spite of a series of complaints and one report of another fatal accident involving the same type of tyre.

The crash happened when a rear SP4 on a Ford Cortina, carrying three people and two children on their way to a wedding, blew out, the radial tread separating from the steel bands in the tyre. The High Court in Oxford was told that the Cortina, travelling at 85mph, mounted the central

reservation and smashed into the Carrolls' Austin Princess.

Lolita Barclay, 12, from Bristol, a passenger in the Cortina, was killed. Susan Carroll, who was in the front seat, suffered severe head injuries and has been left partially blind. She will receive £550,000, while Alan, her husband, who suffered a punctured lung, will get



Lolita Barclay, who died after blow-out

£22,000, daughter Catherine £15,000, and son Stephen, 17, who broke his legs, £10,000. The family of the dead girl, who were not in the car, and the eight injured sued Dunlop Ltd, now owned by the BTR Group. Lawyers claimed that Dunlop had had more than 20 complaints about the SP4 radials, and a similar tyre was alleged to have caused a crash in 1985 in which two people died. But the Carrolls' case was the first time Dunlop had been sued: a handful of previous claims were understood to have been settled out of court.

Thousands of SP4s were made and lawyers fear that some might still be on the roads or stored in garages. However, the type of SP4 involved was phased out after 1985 when the Dunlop tyre-making business was split up. The brand name was sold to Sumitomo of Japan, which formed SP Tyres UK in Birmingham, while BTR acquired Dunlop Ltd — and,

ultimately, responsibility for the Carrolls' litigation.

SP Tyres was not involved in the litigation, but a spokesman said: "Many millions of this size and type of tyre were produced and have given perfectly satisfactory service. We have no reason to believe that this accident was anything other than a tragic but extraordinary occurrence."

Judge Mellor will deliver his formal judgment in court on Monday, but found Dun-

lop 80 per cent to blame for the accident. Alexander Bent, the Cortina owner who was a passenger, and Lunday Fearon, the driver, and two other passengers, also successfully sued Dunlop. Their damages, and those of Lolita Barclay's parents, will be decided at a later hearing. However, the judge decided that Mr Bent was 12 per cent responsible and Mr Fearon 8 per cent to blame after Dunlop claimed that the tyre was

seven years old, heavily worn and had been poorly repaired after a puncture, while the Cortina was also driven at high speed. John Crowley, QC, representing the Carrolls, from Grove in Oxfordshire, said: "Dunlop ought to have taken steps to warn the public and have withdrawn the SP4 from then on." Dunlop blamed the Cortina's owner for running the worn tyre while under-inflated.



Rex Crocken, who was an expert witness in the case, with a defective tyre



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Daily dose that can save a baby

In its campaign to improve the health of Britons, the Department of Health can claim many battle honours. But it has not made women aware that changing their lifestyle, giving up cigarettes, eating a well-balanced diet and not finishing the bottle of gin when pregnant is not enough to ensure that their baby has the best chance of being born healthy.

Before they conceive, not after, women need to take at least one other precaution, on which their baby's future may depend.

In order to prevent a wide range of congenital abnormalities, any woman in whom there is a possibility of pregnancy should take a daily vitamin tablet a small dose of folic acid, one of the vitamin B group of vitamins, each morning. The Health Education Authority announced this week that it is launching a three-year programme to make those women who might conceive fully aware of the importance of folic acid for their baby's wellbeing.

In 1991 the Medical Research Council produced the scientific evidence which confirmed the opinion already held by many doctors, that daily folic acid would minimise the likelihood of having a baby born with a neural tube defect. Even for women

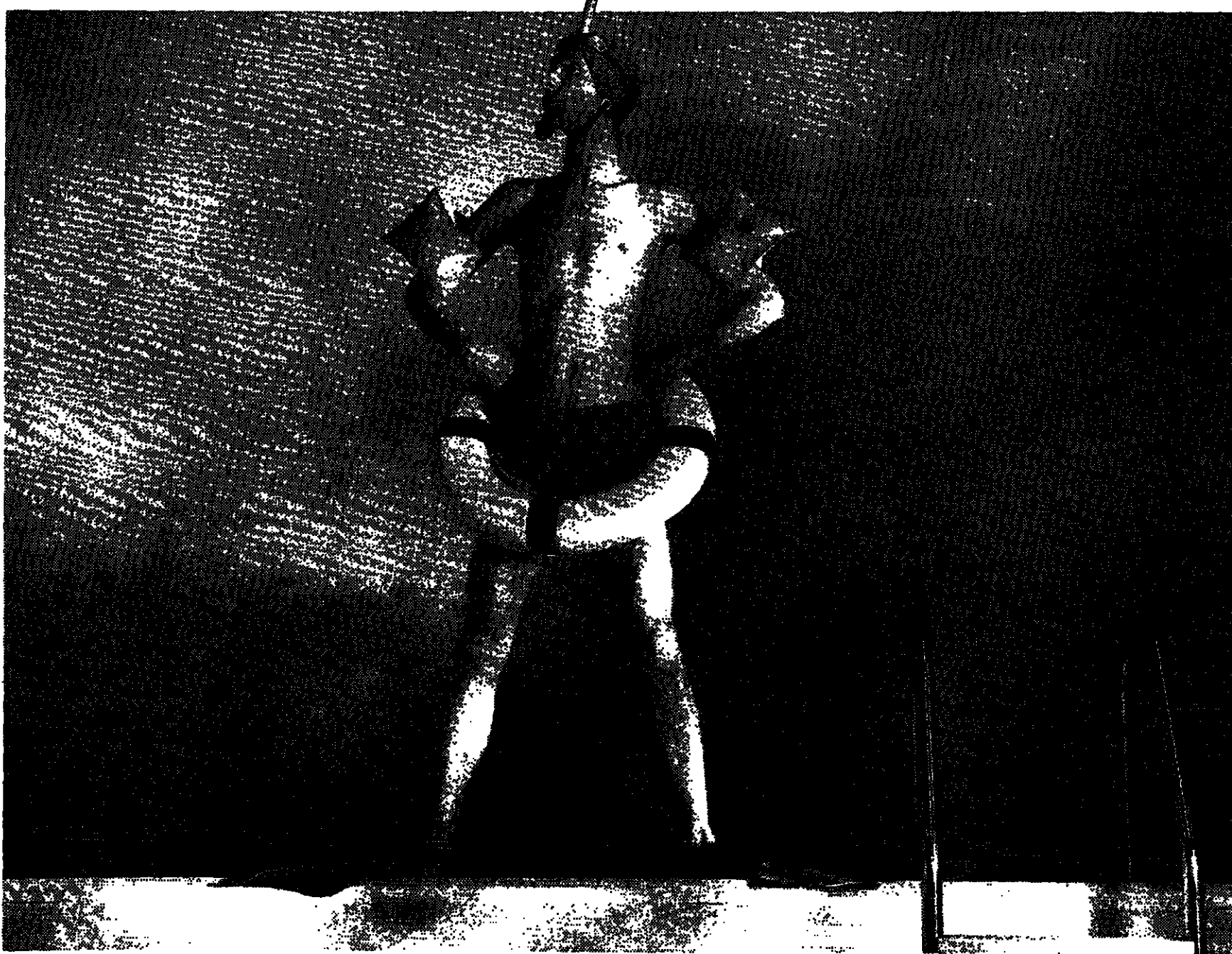
who already had one child affected in this way, taking folic acid reduced by 71 per cent the likelihood of having another similarly afflicted.

Recent research has shown that only 9 per cent of women are aware of the value of folic acid and only 5 per cent are taking it before pregnancy. The evidence is now overwhelming that the majority of these defects, which lead to babies developing spina bifida, grossly deficient brains and skulls, or changes in the central nervous system which lead to hydrocephalus, can be prevented by folic acid tablets. It is not good enough to take this vitamin supplement after they have become pregnant, because these deformities occur very early in the intra-uterine life of the baby.

Buying a pram before a baby was born was seen in the past as tempting fate. Some women feel that it is equally presumptuous to take this small vitamin tablet, at a cost of about two or three pence daily, before they have become pregnant. The only result of this superstitious sensitivity may be a stillbirth, or a child whose life is blighted forever.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

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Even if your idea of swimming is that annual dip in the hotel pool, you can join over 50,000 other swimmers taking part in the 1996 BT Swimathon. From 18th-24th March at over 500 pools nationwide, we'll be raising

money for Childline, Britain's only 24 hour helpline for children in trouble or danger, as well as five charities promoting sport for the disabled. This is the BT Swimathon's 10th anniversary, and for the

first time we've introduced a special Happy Hour session for less experienced swimmers, as well as the traditional five thousand metre swim. To take part or simply make a donation, please call now on LoCall 0345 881 199.

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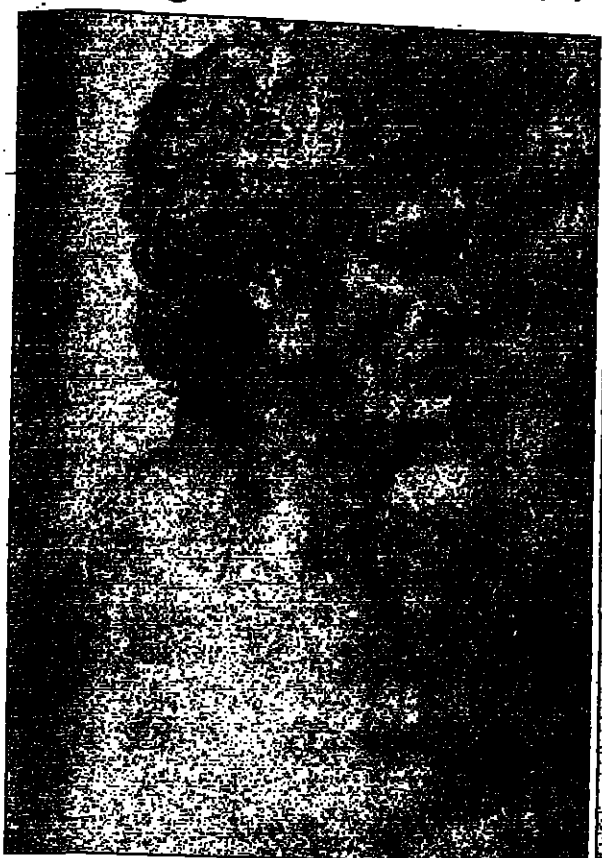
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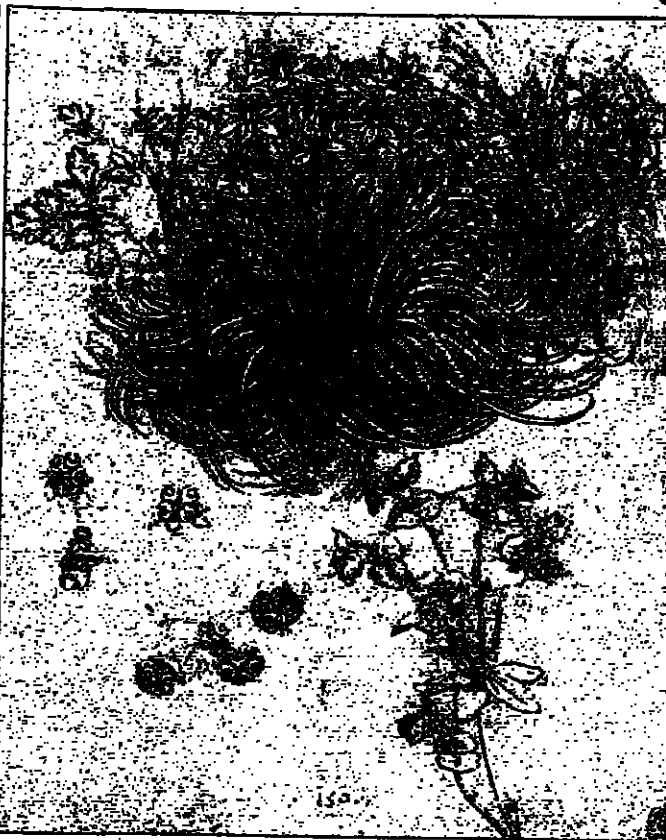
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مكتبة من الأصل

Royal show gives new angle on master draughtsman



Head of an old man, created in about 1510



Star of Bethlehem: Leonardo was a keen botanist



Studies of a woman's hands, circa 1476



Head of Leda, the much-reproduced image of beauty

BY DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A GROTESQUE caricature of an ill-matched couple is among nine drawings by Leonardo da Vinci to be exhibited for the first time since they were created by the master five centuries ago.

They are part of a selection of 100 drawings from the Royal Collection, which holds most of the world's surviving Leonardos, opening today at the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace.

All the drawings in this collection were bequeathed by Leonardo (1452-1519) to his favourite pupil, Francesco Melzi. On Melzi's death, in

about 1570, they were sold by his son to Pompeo Leoni, a sculptor. A 1690 document notes that the drawings were in the Royal Collection. How or when they were acquired is unknown.

The show reflects Leonardo's talent not only as the greatest draughtsman in the history of Western art but as a sculptor, architect, musician, anatomist, botanist, engineer, geologist and map-maker. He left no field of knowledge untouched, exploring ideas for everything from flying-machines to tortoise-like tanks.

The exhibition spans his career and includes some of his greatest drawings, such as

his exquisite Head of Leda. The much-reproduced beauty contrasts with the caricatured couple, who will be seen for the first time. The 1490 image shows a roguish man slipping a ring on to the finger of a gullible older woman whose flamboyant dress contrasts with her haggard face, distorted into monstrous features. Such caricatures have long perplexed scholars, although the depiction of human oddities was

popular in the Renaissance. A medical scholar at Houston University is to study whether such characters might have existed, their faces contorted perhaps by dental deformities and other ailments.

Martin Clayton, assistant curator of drawings for the Royal Collection, said that the theme of the ill-matched couple appeared in European art in the later 15th century, although it can be traced back to antiquity in literature. "It's

most common form involved a lecherous old man being duped by a young woman, often shown filching his purse while his hands are otherwise occupied. As such the image was a satire on Lust and Avarice," Mr Clayton said.

"Leonardo's treatment is unusual, combining a young man and old woman, and concentrating on the psychological rather than the material aspects of the theme."

Mr Clayton added that Leo-

Other previously unseen sketches include a 1490 study of light falling on a face. Mr. Clayton said that the drawings and notes, in Leonardo's characteristic mirror-writing, throw light on the gradations of illumination of an object from a single light-source. For Leonardo, light and shade had to be precise, the artist

map, from about 1503, explores the idea of a bypass for a stretch of the Arno which was not navigable as far as Florence because of rapids in the ravine between Signa and Montelupo. Leonardo, understanding the commercial and military advantages of a smooth passage, proposed a route for a canal. Three of the unseen images date from his final years: opulent costume designs for a masquerade

whose court Leonardo was employed, and "a deluge". Mr Clayton said that Leonardo was "much taken with describing scenes of cataclysm towards the end of his life". In this image, a town has been engulfed by massive swirls of water, like whirlpools.

□ **The exhibition runs until January 12, 1997, and is open every day except April 5 and December 25 and 26. Tickets £3.50 adults, £2.50 over-60s,**



Ill-matched couple: corner of sketch has been cut off



Study of the fall of light on a face

Lennon's man in the mac revealed

By ROBIN YOUNG

A FORMER policeman has told how he came to be immortalised as "the man in the mac" in the lyric of a John Lennon song. Cameron Lamb, who now lives on the Isle of Wight, was patrolling the docks in Southampton on a wintry night early in 1969.

He said yesterday: "The sergeant told us John Lennon was thought to be driving towards Southampton with Yoko Ono to get married on a cross-channel ferry. They could not get a licence in Britain because of difficulties over Yoko's citizenship. We all laughed but I made a note because my beat included all the ferry terminals."

Later that evening, Mr Lamb, wearing a gaberdine mackintosh, intercepted a taxi driving the wrong way down a one-way street. "I signalled the driver to stop and cautioned him," Mr Lamb said. "Then a loud Liverpoolian voice came booming from the back

seat. It was John Lennon, with Yoko," Lennon told Mr Lamb, then 24, that he and Yoko were racing to catch a ferry after their car had broken down in Basingstoke. "He said everything had gone wrong that day and that it was all his fault. He asked me to let

In June that year Mr Lamb heard the opening words of the Beatles' latest number one hit, *The Ballad of John and Yoko*. They ran: "Stranded on the dock in Southampton, trying to get to Holland or France, the man in the mac said 'You've got to go back', you know they didn't even give us a chance."

Mr Lamb, 51, said: "Even now when I hear that song, it seems very strange to be mentioned in a work by the Beatles. I am very proud of it." *The Ballad of John and Yoko* reached the top of the charts in June 1969, and the Beatles split up in April the following year.

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A high-contrast, black and white promotional poster for a boxing match. The top half features two large, grainy portraits of the fighters: Mike Tyson on the left, shown in profile facing right, and Bruce Bruno on the right, shown from the chest up facing forward. Between the portraits, the text "Bruno v Tyson" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the word "live" is written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font, followed by "March 17th" in a similar font. At the bottom center, there is a small logo for "SHOWTIME" with the tagline "NO TURNING BACK" underneath it. Below the logo, the words "champion v challenger" are written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The entire poster has a high-contrast, almost stencil-like appearance with a grainy texture.

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Dawn raid flushes protesters from trees and tunnels

By TIM JONES

BAILIFFS accompanied by police staged a pre-dawn raid yesterday to evict protesters from tunnels and tree-tops on the route of the Newbury bypass. The bailiffs were enforcing High Court eviction orders against protesters living in camps on Snelmore Common.

As supporters of the self-styled eco warriors screamed abuse and obscenities, mounted Thames Valley police and security guards fought to clear the way for two telescopic "cherry pickers" to approach the trees in which demonstrators have built platforms.

The machines slowly lifted the bailiffs — all of them rock climbers, steeplejacks or specialist high-rise window cleaners — 40ft into the branches, where determined protesters were waiting to repel them.

As the platforms rose, the tree-dwellers scurried from one lofty encampment to the next in an effort to prevent the bailiffs from cutting the rope walkways connecting the ramshackle tarpaulin-covered shelters.

When the platforms were within touching distance of the first of the nine tree houses at Snelmore, protesters lashed out with their feet and fists. One of them appeared to be wielding a knife.

One bailiff was kicked in the head. As his helmet crashed to the ground supporters cheered wildly. On the second attempt, the four bailiffs in one plat-

form managed to grab one demonstrator. Dangling upside down outside the platform, he was lowered to the ground.

The operation began at 3am, when police cordoned off the hidden entrance to a tunnel, where some demonstrators had hoped to stage a last-ditch siege. Once the tunnel was secured, Paul Faulding, a rescue specialist, crawled down past a sign which read "You are now entering hell" and was amazed by what he found. He said it had been well built, along the lines of a prisoner-of-war escape tunnel, and was about 15ft deep.

"It is about 2ft high and 2ft 6in wide and supported all along by props with the sides covered in planking." The tunnel was at least 35ft long but could be much longer. "So far, I have got to a grille but I don't know what is behind it. It is very wet and the air is foul-smelling and I have got an oxygen monitor with me."

Mr Faulding said he had found enough food, including British Army ration packs, to feed a few people for at least two months. "There were also some good-quality sleeping bags and blankets but it is very, very uncomfortable down there." He added that he planned to get to the end of the tunnel and then retreat, removing the boards as he went. "I take no side in this argument but I have to ensure

there are no hidden tunnels where people are hiding," he said. "My concern is the safety of people."

The bailiffs had been ordered on to the site by Nicholas Blandy, Under Sheriff of Berkshire, to enforce High Court injunctions obtained for the removal of the treehouses.

After five hours of confrontation at Snelmore Common yesterday, the bailiffs had managed to remove only two people from their tree-top fortresses, suggesting it will take several days, if not weeks, to clear all the protesters from the common and other sites.

At the end of a day during which sporadic battles flared, police said they had arrested 13 people for public-order or trespass offences. At a site further down the proposed motorway route, police found two wooden planks studded with 4in nails and concealed under leaves on a footpath.



Tall order: sheriff's officers, raised aloft in a "cherry-picker", struggling with a protester in the treetops of Snelmore Common yesterday

Polluted land could meet housing need

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

MORE money should be spent on cleaning contaminated urban land in an attempt to save rural areas from development, a Royal Commission said yesterday.

The Government estimates that housing equivalent to 27 new towns the size of Milton Keynes will be needed during the coming decades. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution called for a massive increase in the £100 million a year spent by the Government on cleaning contaminated land, to increase the amount of land in cities available to developers, giving them less justification to develop rural sites.

Richard Macrory, Professor of Environmental Law at the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, said another bar to developers using contaminat-

ed land was fears that they might be liable for heavy pollution costs in the future. The commission said that cleaned land should be backed with indemnity certificates to reassure builders and developers.

Sir John said that the need to conserve the fertility of Britain's soils would become ever more crucial in the coming century. The industrialisation of the developing world meant that food surpluses would be a thing of the past, making it vital that land here was of a high standard for growing crops.

The commission's report has identified scores of threats to the health of the land, including the spreading on the land of waste from the water, agricultural, food and drink industries, including sewage sludge.

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Players driven off course fear Japanese owner has expensive plans to cater for tourist market

Members mourn as sun sets on golf club

By JOHN YOUNG

YESTERDAY was one of those February mornings when, as P.G. Wodehouse put it, all nature seems to shout "Fore!". But on the Welcombe golf course, outside Stratford-upon-Avon, shoulders dropped, swings were listless and footsteps laden.

If a drive was sliced, a chip bust or an easy putt missed, what did it all matter? For most of the members had played their last round on the course they loved.

Until a month ago none had any notion of impending disaster. Then the blow fell. The course was to be closed until further notice and subscriptions would not be renewed.

The 157-acre course occupies part of the grounds of the Welcombe Hotel, a great Victorian gothic pile formerly owned by British Transport Hotels and acquired six years ago by Masashi Yamada, a Japanese property tycoon.

The club was formed in 1981 after the course was expanded

from nine to 18 holes. It has 407 members, each paying an annual subscription of £505, of which £475 is passed on to the hotel. Tom Wood, the club chairman, said yesterday that on January 31 he, the secretary and the lady chairman were called to a meeting with Jon Moore, the hotel manager, and told that facilities were to be withdrawn. "No reason was given at all," he said. "We asked if they had a grievance and he said there were no complaints but Mr Yamada had decided to close the club."

He indicated that membership might be reopened in 12 to 18 months, but we anticipate the subscription will be four times as high, that we have to pay green fees as well and we will need to deposit at least £500 for a swipe card for food and drinks. All that would be quite beyond the means of most of our members," Mr Wood added. "There is no argument that Mr Yamada is within his rights. But we think

that to give a club of our standing just one month's notice is ridiculous."

Mr Yamada's action had roused very strong feelings not only among members but within the town itself. Other members made their resentment plain. "In a word we feel sick," John Boyd said. "I assume he just wants to bring in plane loads of Japanese."

George Smith said: "There are plenty of clubs in the area which would be glad to welcome new members, but that's not the point. We are all friends here and we are having to split up and that is very sad."

Mr Moore said yesterday that he had told Mr Wood and the others at the meeting that money was being invested in improvements to the course, and because of that subscriptions would not be renewed for at least a year. "There is every possibility that we will reopen membership but I can't possibly put a date on it."



Below par: members of the Welcombe Golf Club cast long shadows yesterday as they play their last round on the course before its closure

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in Leeds v Everton, featuring Brolin, Amokachi, Mazinga, Kanchelskis and Yeboah, kicking off 16.00.

sports 2

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with live ball-by-ball coverage of the final from Lahore, starting at 09.00.

sports

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against Said Laval, show starts at 22.00.

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as Glasgow Rangers take on Celtic at Ibrox, live and exclusive, kicks off at 13.15.

sports 2

Summer arrives ahead of schedule

By ROBIN YOUNG

TECHNOLOGICAL advances in the horticultural industry mean that aubergines and globe artichokes are available this month. More usual produce for this time of year includes white and red cabbage.

Announced promotions include:

Asda: fresh turkey breast steaks £3.94 a kg, fresh sage and onion stuffed chicken £1.74 a kg, fresh beef stewing steak £3.49 a kg, button mushrooms 9p for 500g. Budgens: fresh boneless pork chops £5.05 a kg, Pilgrim's Choice West Country Tasty Cheddar £1.89 a lb.

Co-op: fresh beef fore quarter roast £3.29 a kg, fresh chicken basted with sunflower oil £2.99 for 1.45 kg, Scottish smoked salmon £2.59 for 100g.

Harrods: ostrich biltong £8.50 for 100g, fresh rainbow trout £3.50 kg, whole Scotch kippers £7.25 for 3.2 kg, freshly cooked lobster £17 for two.

Iceland: chilled pork shoulder £1.79 for 454g, lamb chops £3.49 for 1.19 kg, Grampian 'A' grade chicken £4.99 for 3.2kg, crispy Chinese stir fry 99p for 680g.

Marks & Spencer: New Zealand lamb leg knuckle £5.99 per kg, frozen skinless cod

fillets £3.99 for 650g, large chicken casserole with herb and dumplings £2.29 for 454g, celery hearts 99p for pack of two.

Morrisons: Indian balti meals £1.99, whole salmon £4.38 a kg, whole trout £2.84 a kg, whole lemon sole £10.78 a kg, fresh steamed puddings 69p each.

Safeway: lamb leg steak £11.99 a kg, Chinese-style pork ribs £2.09 for 720g, British peppered cooked ham 65p a 4 lb, new potatoes 21p a lb, Granary bread 69p for 800g.

Sainsbury: fresh beef rib roast £4.88 a kg, whole leg of lamb £5.39 a kg, seafood linguini £2.39 for 510g, red seedless grapes 99p a lb, pink grapefruit 26p each.

WEEKEND SHOPPING

Somerfield: fresh topside/silverside/top rump with added fat £4.36 a kg, Scottish smoked salmon £2.82 for 200g, chicken breast stir fry £1.29 for 225g, sweet potatoes 69p a lb.

Tesco: unsalted rindless back bacon £2.15 a lb, family steak pie £1.49, salmon steaks £2.99 a lb, wholewheat de luxe muesli £1.99 for 1.5 kg, olive ciabatta 79p.

Waitrose: Aberdeen Angus sliced leg £2.39 a lb, New Zealand lamb whole shoulder £2.99 a kg, peeled tiger prawns £5.99 a lb, beetroot 39p for 250g, grapefruit 19p each, black figs 29p each.

Antiques police find letter by Churchill

By JOANNA BAILE

A LETTER from Sir Winston Churchill is the latest treasure to be found among stolen goods seized by police in Brighton's antiques quarter.

Earlier this month, Serena Soames, the wife of Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, received a reward for tracing stolen family heirlooms to shops in the town's North Lane area. Items stolen from the Duke and Duchess of Kent's Oxfordshire home were also discovered recently in one of the district's shops.

The framed handwritten note on 10 Downing Street notepaper was a thank-you for a birthday present but in-

cludes no addressee or date.

The owner has yet to be traced. Valued at £1,000, it was discovered with £260 in forged £20 notes, a book of blank insurance cover notes and other stolen items which were seized after the shop's 51-year-old owner was arrested at an antiques fair at Ardingly, West Sussex.

Police found the letter by Sir Winston, who was Mr Soames's grandfather, near where his wife discovered her antiques and paintings. Mrs Soames, 36, spent three days trudging the streets of Brighton searching for £10,000 worth of items stolen from her family home in Horsham, West Sussex.

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NO TURNING BACK

Both sides agree on essentials, but legal talks could stall over money and future role

Princess's first shots ring hollow over battleground

BY ALAN HAMILTON

BATTLE has been joined in the Wales divorce, and the first rounds in the psychological preamble of winning hearts and minds have been fired by the Princess. But her shots already ring hollow and, ultimately, there may not be much of a war.

The Princess's statement on Wednesday that she had agreed to a divorce, was surrendering the style of Her Royal Highness, would continue to live in Kensington Palace and would retain an office in St James's Palace, appeared to bear all the authority of a communiqué at a peace treaty. But it was a unilateral, spur-of-the-moment announcement, which caught the palace by surprise.

The palace reacted swiftly, if a little lamely, releasing the news that the Queen was "very interested" to hear of the Princess's acquiescence to a divorce on the conditions described. If ever anyone wished to describe, in two words, a combination of monarchical faint praise and a description of that Hanoverian scowl which sometimes clouds the Sovereign's features, the phrase "very interested" would fit the bill.

Jane Atkinson, the Princess's recently appointed press spokesman, said yesterday that she had been told by her employer to issue the statement within minutes of a private meeting between the Prince and Princess, because they wished to preempt any unofficial leaks. Privately, however, Buckingham Palace

is in no doubt that the statement was a bargaining counter and an appeal to the sympathy vote, as was the Princess's decision yesterday to cancel her appearance at a Red Cross function. She was replaced by Cilla Black.

Old royal hands remember the Princess turning out on public duty when she had much more reason to remain indoors with her tears. On the



Atkinson: Princess told her to issue statement

night in June 1994 that the Prince of Wales made his television confession of adultery with Camilla Parker Bowles, the Princess turned up to a reception at the Serpentine Gallery in Hyde Park looking even more than usually glamorous.

Ms Atkinson was adamant yesterday that the Princess had emerged from her meeting with her estranged husband in the belief that the basic framework of a divorce settlement had been agreed. It

may well have been, but no one else — neither the palace nor the Prince's staff — seems to think that anything has been set in concrete.

The Queen is irritated that an unofficial source in the Princess's camp is contacting selected news outlets with carefully selected insights, including the claim that, at their meeting in St James's Palace, the Princess told the Prince: "I still love you, because you are the father of my children."

The truth, as ever, appears to lie in the no-man's-land between the two camps. There is no serious dispute over the essential terms of the divorce — though lawyers will argue about amounts of money — and the two parties have known that all along. What may take longer are the convoluted discussions over what the Princess will do with the remainder of her public life.

Despite the protestations of the palace that nothing is yet agreed, what the Princess claimed on Wednesday will be close to what is finally sealed. After a divorce she has no real entitlement to retain the style of Her Royal Highness. On the question of access to and influence over her children, there could never have been any serious argument. The majority of modern divorces come to civilised agreements about the access of both parents to the offspring, and there is no reason why the Waleses should be any different.

Features, page 15
Bernard Levin, page 16



The Prince yesterday, visiting a beach polluted by the Milford Haven oil spill

Bargaining chips include right to issue warrants

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

LAWYERS for the Prince and Princess of Wales were preparing yesterday for their first meeting after the Princess's unexpected statement. Her lump-sum settlement, likely to be about £15 million, will be the subject of the toughest negotiations. But there is also a host of other matters up for negotiation that will shape her lifestyle and degree of influence.

Anthony Julius of Mishcon De Reya, for the Princess, and Fiona Shackleton of Farrer and Co, for the Prince, will discuss details ranging from the right for her to issue "By Appointment" warrants, to restrictions on living abroad and the future of her £20 million collection of jewellery.

Both sides have bargaining counters: the Prince does not want negotiations to be protracted or to see daily reporting of details in a way that could damage the reputation of the monarchy. The Princess is keen to secure an ambassadorial role but Buckingham Palace will be determined that any such role is within its control — one reason for letting her keep Kensington Palace. She understands that she will also keep an office at St James's Palace.

The Prince is thought to have agreed to lodge the petition for divorce. The Princess has conceded the title Her Royal Highness after conversations with the Prince and the Queen. In return, the Princess believed she had secured a pledge to live in Kensington Palace, although the Palace denied this had been agreed.

The best package the Princess can hope to achieve would fulfil her wish for both public

status and private freedom. It would include:

□ A £15 million settlement providing an annual income of £500,000 a year, and a further sum for a property in the country or on the Continent.

□ An ambassadorial role and invitations to some state occasions.

□ Full involvement in the upbringing of her sons and their preparation for public life.

□ The right to retain the use of her jewellery, with those items considered the property of the Crown passing to any future wife of William.

□ Freedom to live abroad for part of the year.

□ Hereditary titles for any children of a future marriage.

The worst scenario would give the Princess neither status nor freedom, or would gradually erode over the years what status she does enjoy.

□ The £15 million settlement could be hedged about with restrictions on her work and where she lives.

□ The Queen could retain an important influence over the couple's sons and even overrule the Princess on decisions affecting their future.

□ There could be confidentiality clauses preventing disclosures about her married life or the Royal Family.

□ She may be forced to return those jewels considered the property of the Crown.

□ A minimal public role combined with close scrutiny by the Palace of the Princess's everyday life: no invitations to state occasions; no power to issue warrants.

□ Her private office pared to a minimum.

Regiments to keep royal commander

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Princess of Wales will remain colonel-in-chief of two regiments, one of which is named after her, after the divorce has gone through. Army sources said yesterday.

The Princess is colonel-in-chief of the Light Dragoons and The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. She is also colonel-in-chief of three Commonwealth units, the Princess of Wales's Own Regiment, the West Nova Scotia Regiment of Canada and the Royal Australian Survey Corps.

Army sources said there was no question of the regi-

ments changing their colonel-in-chief.

The Princess became a colonel-in-chief immediately after her marriage. Initially she was colonel-in-chief of the 13th/18th Royal Hussars (Queen Mary's Own) and the Royal Hampshire Regiment, but they were merged in the Army cuts.

The Light Dragoons, based in Newcastle upon Tyne, is an armoured reconnaissance regiment which has served the most tours of duty in the former Yugoslavia, losing three men to a landmine last month. The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment is based in Canterbury.

Happily married lawyers prepare for engagement

BY CAROL MIDDLEY

THE two divorce lawyers doing battle for the Prince and Princess of Wales enjoy happily married lives.

Fiona Shackleton, 39, who acts for the Prince, celebrates her 11th wedding anniversary in September and has two daughters, Lydia, 6, and Cordelia, 7. She is a staunch believer that, if at all possible, divorce should be avoided, and leaves the office at 5.30pm sharp each day so that she can spend the evening at home in Belgravia with her family.

Her adversary, Anthony Julius, also 39, has been married for 20 years and has four children (the elder three at state schools). He met his wife Judith, also a solicitor,

when he was 19. They live in a modest semi-detached house in Hampstead, north London, and share a keen interest in race relations and ethnic minorities.

Mrs Shackleton, of Farrer & Co, solicitors to the Royal Family, is experienced in divorce matters and is described as having a razor-sharp mind and has a reputation as a hard-nosed negotiator. The former debutante, who was co-author of *The Divorce Handbook*, represented the Duke of York during his separation.

Mr Julius, head of litigation at Mishcon De Reya, has earned the nickname "Anthony Genius" for having an incisive legal brain and a flair for writing. He is author of

the book, *T.S. Eliot: Anti-Semitism and Literary Form*. Stephen Fry, for whom Mr Julius secured an out-of-court settlement when the actor was sued for walking out of the West End play *Cell Mates*

last year, calls him "probably the most intelligent man I've ever met".

Mr Julius won the Princess's confidence through his work on her action against the *Daily Mirror* after the



Shackleton: reputation as a tough negotiator



Julius: a keen intellect and talent for directness

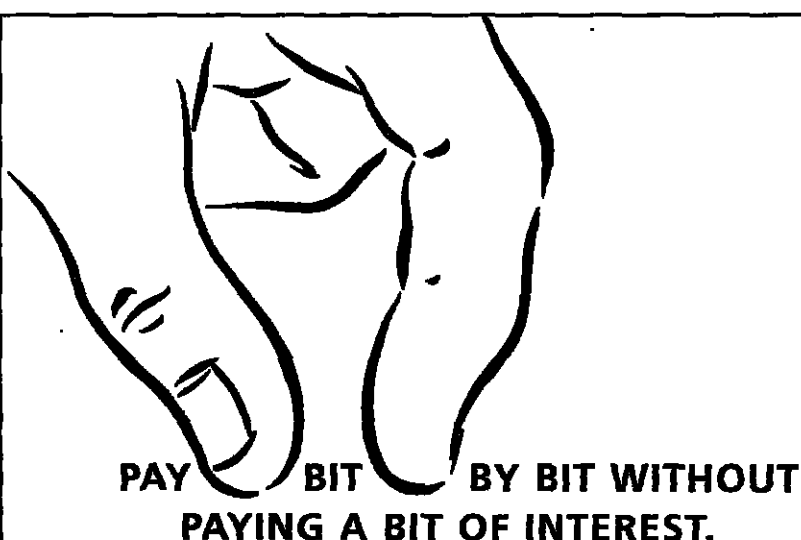
newspaper published pictures of her in a leotard in a gym. The case was settled out of court, avoiding her having to appear in the witness box. As a former lawyer for the *Daily Mail* he is adept at handling the media. Though not a household name, his telephone was busy yesterday with interview requests.

Mr Julius, who is a member of the Labour Party and the Black-Jewish Forum, teaches at University College London, where he recently gave a legal lecture which featured T.S. Eliot and Quentin Tarratino, the American film director. A friend said: "Anthony is not a divorce lawyer — he specialises in commercial litigation — but he is expert at handling complex negotia-

tions and this is why he was chosen for this role."

Those who know Fiona Shackleton say that although she is a seasoned legal tactician she has never been ruthlessly ambitious or craved the limelight. Clients pay the hourly rate of £225 plus VAT for the benefit of her sympathy and skill in taking much of the pain out of the divorce process. One grateful client lodged £1,500 at a designer fashion house for her to spend as she wished.

At £250 an hour, Anthony Julius's talent appears to reside in his intellect and directness. One lawyer said: "There is no side to Anthony. He will tell you what he thinks. You have to be strong enough to take it."



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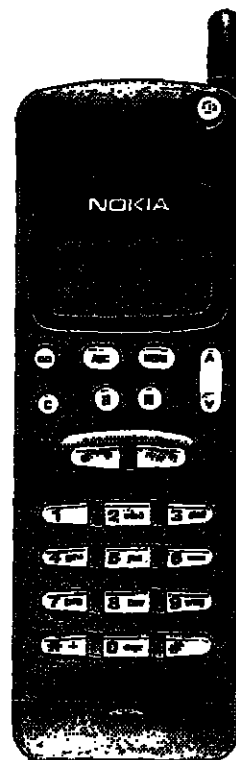
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Major trailing in ten out of 14 measures of leadership quality

Blair strengthens his advantage in poll ratings battle

By Peter Riddell

TONY BLAIR has extended his lead over John Major on several key measures of their image as party leaders, according to a new MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, asked people how they view the party leaders. Mr Blair is rated more favourably than Mr Major on 10 out of 14 measures of leadership and in all but two cases has improved his relative position compared with last September when the same question was last asked.

In particular, the number regarding Mr Blair as rather inexperienced has dropped by seven points to 29 per cent, while the proportion regarding him as a capable leader has risen 4 points to 30 per cent. Even on measures where Mr Major is ahead, such as being patriotic, good in a crisis and understanding world problems, his lead over Mr Blair has narrowed.

These figures suggest that there has been a firming up of

Mr Blair's image. The one exception is having "a lot of personality". Even though Mr Blair is well ahead of Mr Major on this measure, by 27 to 5 per cent, his rating has deteriorated since September and is lower among working-class than middle-class people. Unskilled workers may find it harder to identify with Mr Blair than the professional middle classes: the former are twice as likely as the latter to have no opinion about Mr Blair.

But the professional middle classes are, in turn, twice as likely to regard Mr Blair as rather inexperienced as unskilled workers are.

Mr Blair has improved his image among Liberal Democrats. The net balance of those satisfied less dissatisfied with the way Mr Blair is doing his job as Labour leader has shifted from minus 7 to plus 8 points among Liberal Democrat supporters since last September. More of them also regard him as a capable leader, underlining the over-

lap of views of Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters.

By contrast, Mr Major's rating remains in the doldrums. He may have been affected by the row over the Scott report since the number regarding him as more honest than most politicians has dropped by 5 points to 18 per cent, the lowest ever for him.

Among Tory supporters, there has been some firming in his image. More Tories think that he is good in a crisis (27 against 22 per cent) and has sound judgement (21 against 17 per cent) than last September. But there has been a sharp drop, from 51 to 39 per cent, in the number of Tory supporters who regard him as more honest than most politicians.

Paddy Ashdown, who has been a party leader for seven and a half years, has a largely unchanged rating since people have generally formed a clear view of him. He comes out strongly on measures of being good in a crisis and more honest than most politicians



Blair: increasingly seen as capable leader



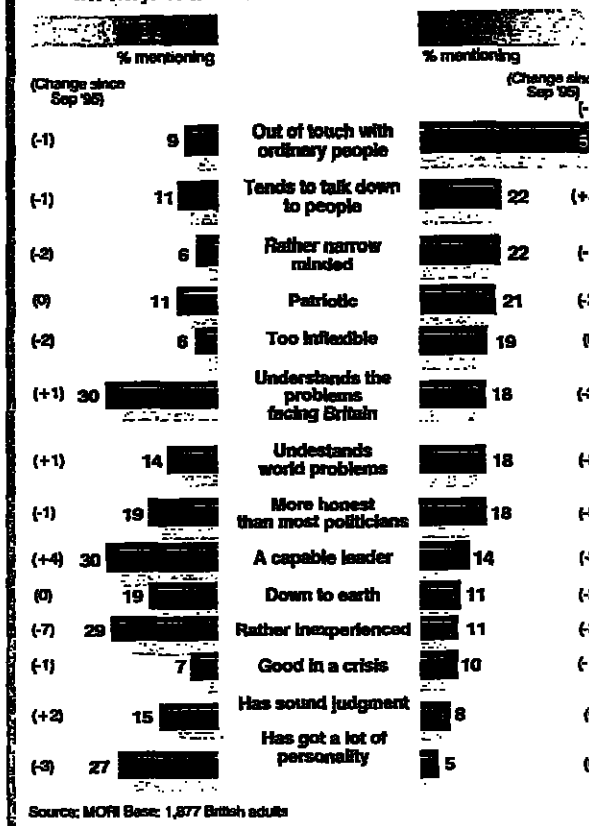
Major: his ratings remain in the doldrums

(on both of which he is ahead of Mr Major and Mr Blair), and on being a capable leader, down to earth and patriotic.

These findings tie in with the monthly questions about satisfaction with the leaders. Mr Blair continues to have the

MAJOR AND BLAIR: HOW THEY COMPARE

Q Here is a list of things both favourable and unfavourable that have been said about various politicians. I would like you to pick out all those statements that you think fit... Mr Major/Mr Blair



most favourable rating, though dissatisfaction with his performance has been rising in recent months.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,877 adults at 138 ward sampling points across Britain.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face on February 23 and 26. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (11 per cent), are undecided (7 per cent) or who refuse to name a party (3 per cent).

Tories leaving it late for election-winning surge

Every month, Tory and Labour strategists await the opinion polls with a mixture of hope and apprehension. The Tories hope that, for the first time in three years, their ratings may rise above 30 per cent, while Labour worries about when, and by how much, their huge poll lead will narrow. So far, there have been hints of a Tory upturn, but nothing has been sustained. The latest MORI poll for *The Times* puts Labour back at 57 per cent, its highest level since last July, with the Tories down three points over the past month at 26 per cent, with the Liberal Democrats trailing along at 14 per cent.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, was overshadowed by the Scott report. Just one in 12 people, and only a fifth of Tory supporters, believe that the Government has handled the report well. More than

HIDDEN ON POLITICS

two thirds of the public, and well over a half of Tories, think that the handling has been bad. Similarly, by a three-to-one margin the public thinks that the ministers named in the report should have resigned; a third of Tories agree with just two fifths disagreeing. The Scott row also appears to have dented John Major's honesty rating, and reinforced the time-for-a-change argument.

If that is the maximum impact of the Scott row, then the Tories can hope that it is merely an interruption in the slow revival which started in the late autumn. Their rating over the past three months is three points higher than a year earlier. There is some

evidence of a firming in support among existing Tories. But satisfaction with the way the Government is running the country remains at a low level. The public as a whole disapproves of its performance by a six to one margin and a majority of Tory supporters are also hostile.

The Government has been pinning its hopes on a return of economic confidence following a recovery in living standards, tax cuts and a further fall in unemployment. The economic optimism index, measuring those thinking that the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months, showed signs of picking up a month ago, but has since slipped from minus 11 to minus 18 points, the same as last autumn. The main shift has

occurred among the professional middle classes.

On the Labour side, there is little so far to worry Tony Blair. His party's support and his personal rating remain at high levels, despite worries a month ago about the impact of the party row over Harriet Harman's decision to send one of her sons to a selective grammar school. The only doubt is the slight rise in recent months in dissatisfaction with Mr Blair's record as Labour leader among both the public as a whole and Labour supporters. But Mr Blair is steadily sharpening his image with the public.

Any month's polls are always affected by newsworthy events. For instance, the number of people mentioning Northern Ireland as among the

most important issues facing Britain today has risen in the wake of the renewed IRA bombing campaign from 1 to 12 per cent, the highest level since August 1988. Similarly, the number in Wales mentioning pollution and the environment has jumped from 2 to 15 per cent in a month following the Pembroke oil spill.

The latest polls are, of course, no pointer to what will happen on election day, whether it is this autumn or next spring. People are at present expressing discontent with the Tories' record in office, not deciding on the next government. But the Tories are leaving it very late if they are to mount a last-minute surge. They have never been so far behind this late in a Parliament.

PETER RIDDELL

Labour to provide a learning plan for every child

By Jill Sherman, Political Correspondent

CHILDREN as young as three will be given individual learning plans as part of an ambitious programme to improve academic standards being drawn up by the Labour Party.

Under the proposals, every three and four-year-old would have objectives set out in a plan agreed with their parents. This would be reviewed every two years until the child completed its schooling.

Bright and gifted children with an aptitude for a specific subject would be given specialised teaching to encourage them to develop their skill at an early age. The extra needs of less able children would also be addressed in the individual programmes. Parents would have to ensure that children completed homework or attended extra classes stipulated in the plan.

The scheme, which will be piloted in two or three local councils in Scotland, could eventually be extended throughout the country.

The confidential proposals will be outlined next week in an education paper to be put to the Scottish Labour Party conference in Edinburgh. Senior party sources suggested the scheme could be implemented throughout Scotland over ten years at less than £50 million in start-up costs.

They insisted that the money could be found within existing resources. About £20 million could be released from

the assisted places scheme, which Labour is pledged to abolish, and about £30 million could be found from money designated for the Government's nursery voucher scheme in Scotland.

Ministers announced yesterday that an extra 4,000 assisted places for children from low-income families would be available in independent schools this September (John O'Leary writes).

The expansion, which will bring 60 more schools into the £118-million scheme, is the first step in the Government's commitment to double the number of subsidised places. The process will take at least six years, and will depend on the Tories remaining in government.

More than 400 schools applied for 7,400 assisted places when Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, invited bids last December. Some of the 120 unsuccessful applicants may be included in the next phase of the expansion, in September 1997.

IN PARLIAMENT

YESTERDAY in the Commons: questions to agriculture ministers and the Deputy Prime Minister, standing in for Mr Major, debate on Welsh affairs, in the Lords: the Family Law Bill, report of the Committee on the Environment, second reading: the Public Interest Disclosure Bill, second reading: the Trusts of Land and Appointment of Trustees Bill, second reading: the Appropriation (Northern Ireland) Order, and the Farm and Conservation Grant (Variation) Scheme.

Ryder to stand down

By James Landale, Political Reporter

THE former Tory Chief Whip Richard Ryder is to leave Parliament at the general election.

The MP for Mid-Norfolk — the 52nd Tory to stand down — made the announcement yesterday, giving no reason but expressing his sadness. He spent five difficult years as Chief Whip before returning to the back benches last summer. Since then he is understood to have felt increasingly detached from Westminster.

Mr Ryder, 47, entered Parliament in 1983 having served as Margaret Thatcher's political secretary between 1975

and 1981. He swiftly joined the Government as a whip, before becoming a junior Agriculture Minister, Economic Secretary to the Treasury and later the Paymaster General.

After his appointment as Chief Whip in November 1990, he became famed for his discretion: it was joked that he only gave the time of day "on a need-to-know basis".

But as Mr Major's majority fell, the Tory back benches became more rebellious. Mr Ryder was blamed for the Commons defeat over VAT on fuel and for difficulties with the whipless Euro-rebels.

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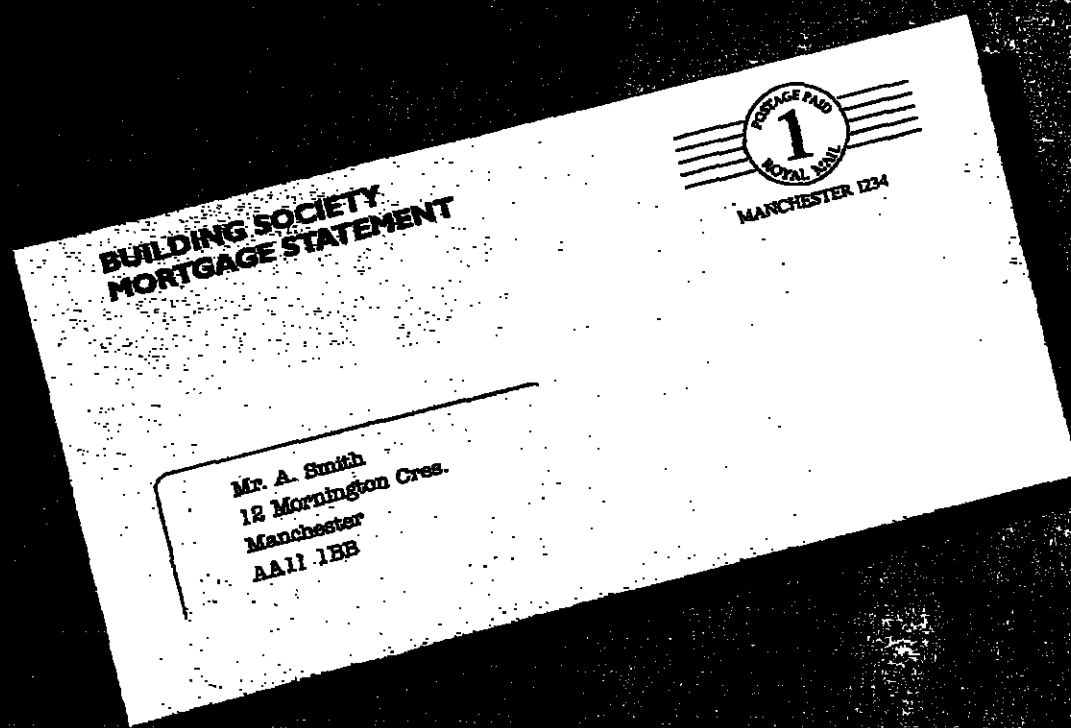
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Here's one statement that doesn't tell the whole story.



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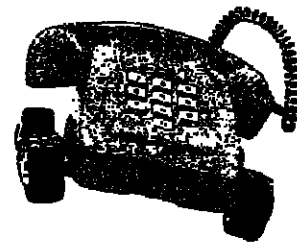
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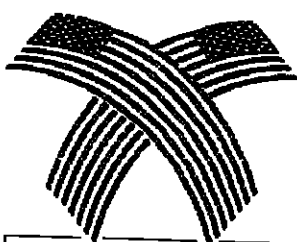


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Republican funding controversy

Brothers unite behind big-spending Forbes

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON



US PRIMARIES

CONTRIVERSY was growing yesterday over the personal fortune that Steve Forbes is lavishing on the chaotic Republican presidential race, but he continued to enjoy the loyalty of his family.

True to their Scottish roots, his three brothers presented a clan-like, united front to taunts that they would soon be questioning how much he intended to spend. After Arizona, Mr Forbes is now basking in his second primary victory and is the surprising front-runner in the delegate count.

His fortune is put at \$440 million (£288 million). In addition, holdings of the family's magazine publishing firm include a mansion in Battersea, London, a chateau in Nor-

mandy, a private island in Fiji and a palace in Tangier.

Mr Forbes has spent more than \$25 million on the primaries. So has Robert Dole. The difference is that Mr Forbes is self-financed and faces no ceiling, while Mr Dole is approaching the limit of \$37 million imposed by his acceptance of matching federal

funds. Mr Dole accused Mr Forbes of trying to buy the election. *The New York Times*, joining the attack, said Mr Forbes was using big money to distort American politics.

An editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* praised Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*. Mr Murdoch attacked the "cancer" of campaign money in the United States and offered the main presidential nominees an hour of free time on election eve on his Fox television network. The paper said: "Murdoch is offering something that serves the public interest and he deserves credit for his initiative."

Mr Dole's treasurer, Bob

Lighthizer, estimated that Mr Forbes has actually spent close to \$40 million, most on television advertising. He claimed that to stay competitive Mr Forbes would have to sell shares in the family business.

But the prospect was laughed off in New York publishing circles. It only because the company is privately held. Mr Forbes, the eldest son, was left 51 per cent of the voting stock by his flamboyant father, Malcolm. The firm's assets, however, were shared more evenly among Steve, who is 48, and his three brothers, Bob, 47, Kip, 45, and Tim, 42. All are executives in Forbes Inc., the company founded in 1917 by their grandfather, Bertie Forbes, a poor country boy when he left his native Aberdeenshire for America.

The four brothers, who were forced by their father to learn the bagpipes and to wear kilts, retain a fondness for Scotland. They are renowned in New York for loyalty and closeness, often dining out together and taking family outings. They have given no sign of concern, even to close aides, over the magnitude of Mr Forbes's election bills. Rather, as Tim Forbes put it, they admire him as a determined man, not easily frightened by attacks. The youngest brother said: "Don't let his smiling, low-key demeanour fool you. Inside there is someone very steely."

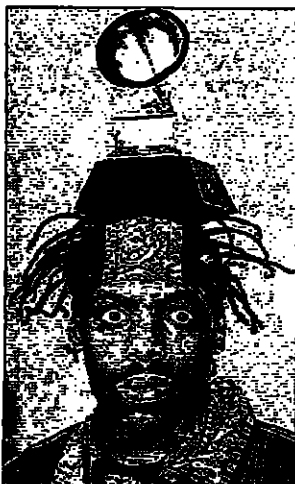
Yesterday a court ruled that Mr Forbes will, after all, be allowed on the ballot for the primary in New York state next Thursday. Dole supporters who control the local party had tried to keep other candidates off the ballot by insisting they first gather tens of thousands of signatures.

Mr Forbes and Patrick Buchanan sued, arguing that ballot access rules were the most restrictive in America and impossible for any candidate to meet, other than one favoured by party officials. Three appeal judges agreed. Mr Buchanan is not rated as a contender, but the clash between Mr Dole and Mr Forbes could make the primary the most competitive in New York Republican history.

Annie Lennox and Seal perform *What's Going On* in a tribute to Marvin Gaye at the 38th Grammy awards

Seal puts his stamp on Grammy awards

FROM GILES WHITTALL IN LOS ANGELES



Coolio's rap award goes to his head

SEAL, the standard-bearer of the new wave of British soul music, won three of the top five Grammy awards at the recording industry's answer to the Oscars with a song that was almost omitted from his latest album.

The ballad, *Kiss From a Rose*, won international recognition because of the *Batman Forever* film soundtrack, but had nearly been dropped from his current collection. "It stood out not as a great song but as a sore thumb," Seal said backstage at the Los Angeles ceremony on Wednesday. He won awards for record of the year, song of the year and the best male pop

vocal performance. Other British winners at the ceremony, praised for shedding its conservative image, included Annie Lennox, the former Eurythmics singer, who took the prize for the year's best female pop vocal performance, and George Martin, given a lifetime achievement award for his work as the Beatles' producer.

In one of the most competitive classical categories, Britain's Christopher Hogwood conducted his Academy of Ancient Music with the American soprano Sylvia McNair on her winning recording of songs by Henry Purcell. The coveted album of the

year award went to Alanis Morissette, a 21-year-old Canadian singer-songwriter whose debut collection, *Jagged Little Pill*, has raised eyebrows with its sexually explicit lyrics.

For the first time, nominees were screened by a 25-strong committee anxious to reverse a slide in credibility after the awards honouring groups like Milli Vanilli but never Jimi Hendrix or The Who.

But the evening's emphasis was on the young and the experimental. Coolio, winner of the year's best rap solo performance award, warned America's violence-prone teenagers that there "ain't no gangsters living in paradise".

Whiff of fire and brimstone as Buchanan woos Bible Belt

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

IT TAKES a few minutes before a visitor to Bob Jones University realises why this campus differs from any other in America. Young men and women stroll round in pairs and sit together on classroom steps, but they rarely touch, never hold hands and emphatically never kiss.

Bob Jones University is unique. A fundamentalist Christian college founded by an Alabama evangelist in 1927, it aims to mould its 5,000 students "in Christ's likeness". The university forbids alcohol, tobacco and sex. The girls wear long dresses, the men jackets, ties and mandatory short-back-and-sides. They attend chapel at 11 each morning. Interracial dating and marriages are banned on biblical grounds, but in the 1980s the Supreme Court deemed it racist and removed its tax-exempt charitable status.

Elsewhere in America such an institution would be considered remarkable, but not here in South Carolina's northwest corner near the Blue Ridge mountains. This is fervent Bible Belt country where every other radio sta-

tion is evangelical, Sundays are dry, and creationists publicly attack the theory of evolution. It is also, in the run-up to South Carolina's crucial presidential primary tomorrow, Pat Buchanan country.

The tub-thumping populist trails 11 points behind Robert Dole, according to the latest

6 He conjured a vision of a white, Christian nation again without quite saying so

poll. His protectionist message plays poorly in a state that has attracted copious foreign investment. His only hope of stopping Mr Dole, winning South Carolina, then storming through the South, is to persuade these Christian conservatives to turn out in force. He has already addressed Bob Jones University. He was

appearing last night at a Christian Coalition "God and Country" rally in Columbia, the state capital, and on Wednesday evening delivered a fire-and-brimstone sermon to 1,000 almost exclusively white charismatics packed into Evangelical Cathedral in the "up-state" town of Spartanburg.

The self-styled scourge of Wall Street and corporate greed seamlessly adjusted his message to an audience preoccupied with moral decline. He quoted from the scriptures and promised to be America's "most pro-life president". He talked of making America "God's country again", a phrase that conjures a vision of a white, Christian nation without quite saying so. He railed against the rewriting of history by high priests of political correctness.

These Bible-Belters consider President Clinton a virtual Antichrist, and Mr Buchanan concluded by initiating the President, telling his audience: "I feel your pain." His punchline drew roars of laughter and applause. "Y'all give me the nomination and he will feel your pain."

Race for runaway satellite a non-starter

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE American space agency Nasa seriously considered sending the space shuttle *Columbia* in pursuit of the Italian satellite which snapped its tether and floated away.

Such a mission would have been a thriller: two astronauts undertaking a space walk and wrestling the half-tonne satellite back into the shuttle's cargo bay

while avoiding its 12-mile tether, which is generating thousands of volts as it is dragged through the Earth's magnetic field. The option was rejected because *Columbia*, due to return on March 7, is carrying insufficient fuel. It would have meant extending the flight to rendezvous with the satellite on March 9, the earliest that *Columbia* could have reached it.

At first, Nasa rejected outright any thought of a rescue, but then spent Wednesday reconsidering that decision.

"We went through the whole gamut of things that we could do, and it came back down to propellant margins are very, very slim," Lee Briscoe, the director of mission operations, said. What caused the satellite to break free is still a mystery.

Nasa expects the satellite to re-enter Earth's atmosphere in three to four weeks. It will not be visible from Britain, but watchers in South America, New Zealand, Australia, India, Japan and Malta may catch a glimpse.



THE SUNDAY TIMES KILL THE EXOCET

When HMS Sheffield was spectacularly sunk by an Exocet missile in the Falklands war, the race was on to stop Argentina getting any more of them. The bizarre undercover battle - involving spies, spivs, gun-runners and confidence tricksters - could have come straight from a Le Carré thriller... An amazing story unfolds, in *News Review* on Sunday

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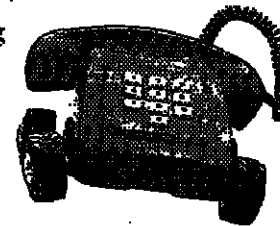
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Berlin's Galeries Lafayette

French store adds touch of chic to street of Checkpoint Charlie

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

A GLITTERING glass-plated French department store yesterday opened its doors in the heart of Berlin, raising hopes that the German capital would shed its Cold War image and recapture some of its turn-of-the-century glamour.

Galleries Lafayette may be having problems in France — it is closing five stores after reporting losses — but it has high expectations of Berlin's Friedrichstrasse. The optimism is matched by Ger-

many's politicians who seem to regard the opening of the shop as on a par with a state visit: telegrams poured in and Eberhard Diepgen, Mayor of the city-state, attended with a gaggle of other politicians and diplomats.

Police surrounded the building not only to control the frenzied shoppers but also to fend off anarchists who have threatened to break every pane of glass to protest against the "consumer temple" — there is no surer sign of a building's significance in modern Berlin.

The real importance of the event

lies not in the luxurious offerings of the shop — its fashion department was more Marks & Spencer than Rive Gauche — as in the sited, Friedrichstrasse was once the hub of Berlin's night and day life. In the 19th century, in the 1920s even, Berliners would stroll down Unter den Linden to show off their uniforms or poodles, would do their shopping in the Leipzigerstrasse, but everybody — beggars and bankers — came to the Friedrichstrasse to enjoy themselves. The Second World War reduced it to rubble and bullet craters still scar the older build-

ings: Hitler's bunker was just around the corner. The Cold War cut the street in two and it became the desolate home of Checkpoint Charlie and uncomfortable East-West border crossings. Snarling alsatians and grim-faced gun-toting guards rather than Prussian promenaders set the tone of the street. The CIA had observation posts on one side of the street, the East German Stasi on the other.

After the collapse of the Berlin Wall, city governors and investors tried to revive the old flair of Friedrichstrasse, named after King Frederick III of Prussia who in the early

18th century first came up with the idea of an arrow-straight north-south boulevard running through his capital. More than 150 international architects have been at work trying to transform the 3km (nearly two miles) of real estate each wants to design the building that will define the spirit of the new reunited Berlin. About 800,000 square metres of office space is being built on the street, and 160,000 square metres of shopping area. Galleries Lafayette is the first major project to be completed.

Berlin's aim is to be the political capital of Europe by the year 2000.

So far, however, it is merely the Continent's largest building site. The reconstruction of historically significant buildings — the old British Embassy or the former Adlon Hotel — may not be enough to give Berlin back its fizz. One shopper at the French store yesterday was 84-year-old Heini Bindeberg, who remembered the street from the 1920s. "The street then was a hotch-potch of small and big shops, cheap and luxurious, of cabarets and theatres. There was something for everybody — here it will be just like a glass canyon of over-priced shops."

Mitterrand widow portrays life with 'secretive seducer'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

DANIELLE MITTERRAND, the widow of François Mitterrand, has painted a frank portrait of her late husband as a secretive Lethario she dubs "François the Seducer" in a book published yesterday.

"I see how my husband excelled in the art of seduction towards the young girls who passed by here," Mme Mitterrand writes in her book *En Toutes Libertés* (In All Freedom), extracts of which were published yesterday in the weekly news magazine *VSD*.

Mme Mitterrand, 71, depicts a marriage dominated by the late President's obsession with politics. On their wedding day in October 1944, she recalls being told by her husband, over the nuptial lunch, that he had to go to a political meeting with former prisoners of war that afternoon.

"I am coming with you," she said.

"If you want," M Mitterrand replied.

"That was the moment, Mme Mitterrand writes, that she discovered her 'first and principal rival: politics'. Many other rivals, political and amorous, would follow, but the President's widow insists "for all those who love us, François and Danielle were inseparable, indissoluble."

Mme Mitterrand was in many ways as driven as her husband. A tireless human rights campaigner, she set up

the Franco-Libertés foundation exactly ten years ago, to which the profits from the book will be donated.

On January 2, six days before his death, M Mitterrand returned from a trip to Egypt with Mazarine, his illegitimate daughter, and her mother, Anne Pingot, and told his wife he had decided to end his life by not eating before his cancer seriously affected his faculties.

"This was no longer the time to encourage him to struggle to live," Mme Mitterrand writes.

In the book the marriage emerges as a partnership that was both passionate and problematic. "I believe I have never been as close to him as I have in the days since he left us," she said. "Not a day, not a



Mme Mitterrand: "never as close to him as now"

minute goes by without my consulting him."

But Mme Mitterrand insists that, despite the former President's wandering eye and the birth of Mazarine, their marriage remained solid to the end. "What woman can say, 'I have never been cheated on' or that she never cheated in her own love life? I stayed with him because he was different. With him, life was never boring," she said in an interview prior to publication.

Mme Mitterrand was long aware of Mme Pingot, and the birth of Mazarine, now 21, did not come as shock, she writes. "Wife and mother to his sons, faithful to the post, it was not for me to pry."

The widow of the Socialist leader also admitted that her husband kept the truth about his illness a secret from her until 1991, some ten years after he was first diagnosed. "He did not lie," Mme Mitterrand told *L'Express* magazine. "He simply preserved our tranquility of spirit."

But the question of whether M Mitterrand lied to the nation by issuing false health bulletins twice a year is still being hotly debated. By speaking openly about her marriage and her husband's adultery, Mme Mitterrand has broken a long-established taboo. A French wife is expected to turn a blind eye to her husband's mistress, maintaining dignity and silence.

Mystical 'healers' grow rich in uneasy Russia

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

BEFORE a hushed audience of her devout followers, the elderly Russian peasant woman waddled down the aisle of a crumbling Soviet-era cinema, blessing the faithful with the healing energy from her outstretched palms.

Babushka (Granny) Olya may look like an ordinary Russian pensioner, but for hundreds of Muscovites suffering from back pains, family problems and the curse of evil spirits, the faith-healer is the last resort against the hardships of Russian life.

In one afternoon session, the rotund mystic lifted curses on 20 weeping followers, attempted to cure a suburban station master of a stutter, and delivered a series of useful tips on herbal medicine and removing evil from the home.

"She is a great healer," said Luba, a nurse at a Moscow hospital, who claimed that the holy water blessed by Babushka Olya was more powerful than any medicine available at the pharmacy. "I drank some the other day and felt purged of impurities."

The gullibility of a few hundred elderly Muscovites, who were parting with up to half their month's pensions for posters and good luck charms, might not be cause for concern. But the rapid spread of faith-healing and the occult across Russia has spawned hundreds of similar



Babushka Olya, the faith-healer who attracts Muscovites with problems from back pain to evil spirits

mystics who are now competing for a multimillion-pound business with strong links to organised crime.

In a country living through a period of crisis and uncertainty, it is natural that people should turn to miracle workers," said Aleksei Peskov, an ethnographer at Moscow State University. "Some of these healers might possess supernatural powers, but in reality most of these people are charlatans."

The use of religious symbols like icons and the constant appeals and prayers to God have concerned the Rus-

sian Orthodox Church, which is fighting a losing battle against street healers.

"What these people practise is nothing short of witchcraft," said Father Christopher Hill, a British priest in the Russian Orthodox Church. "Because of people's ignorance about religion and because of the collapse of the health services, these so-called healers have found a lucrative means of cashing in on superstition."

As a parish priest in Moscow, he was alarmed to find parishioners arriving in his church with bizarre incanta-

tions, spells and potions. One woman, clearly with a dim knowledge of Christian practices, wanted him to pray for the death of her husband.

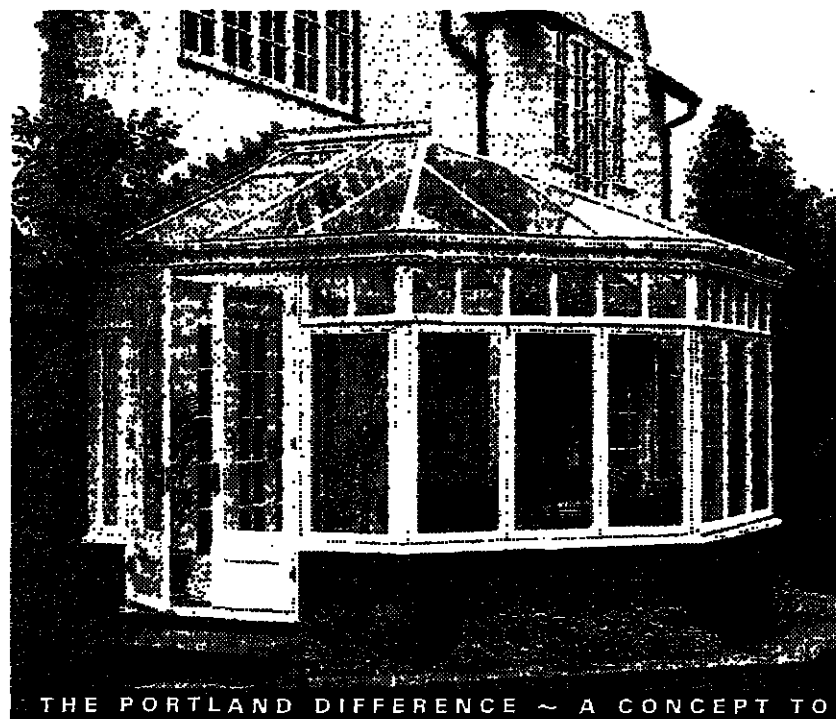
The battle between the established Church and the spiritual fringe has been going on since Russia converted to Christianity a millennium ago. Pagan traditions, particularly in the countryside, have survived alongside the official Church, just as faith-healing and herbal remedies have flourished in spite of modern medicines.

Possibly the most dramatic example of the powerful hold

that the faith-healers have over society emerged during the reign of Tsar Nicholas II, when Tsarina Alexandra fell under the influence of Grigori Rasputin, the peasant mystic, who became the most influential figure at court.

Although the practice of the *znakhari*, the folk healers, was banned by Stalin, their traditions simply went underground. Under Brezhnev a psychic healer called Drzhuna was given official Communist Party approval. She continues her practice and even advises President Yeltsin on matters of state.

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Karpov makes first move into Serb politics

FROM AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE
IN BELGRADE

ANATOLI KARPOV, the Russian chess master, has joined President Milosevic's political party, a Belgrade newspaper reported yesterday.

Mr Karpov, the first foreigner to join the Serbian ruling group, was given his party card last week at a meeting in Sava Pavez, *Politika* said. Mr Karpov and his

arch rival, Garry Kasparov, have for the past four years been frequent players in the Balkan political game. Mr Karpov outraged Croatian opinion last year by playing a chess championship in the war-shattered Serb-held ruins of Vukovar, eastern Croatia, a site that for Croats remains a horrific reminder of Serb brutality.

Vukovar was flattened in 1991 by a three-month siege by Croatian Serbs and

their Serbian backers. A few months later, Mr Kasparov announced his sponsorship of a rival chess championship in Croatia.

Politika reported that he has just joined a Croatian chess club, Borovo-Vukovar 92, to add to his membership of the Sarajevo-based Bosna club.

□ Sarajevo: A British soldier was killed in Bosnia on Wednesday, possibly by the accidental discharge of a weapon, a Nato spokesman said. (*Reuter*)

González rehearses his alibis for defeat

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN
AND EDWARD OWEN
IN MADRID

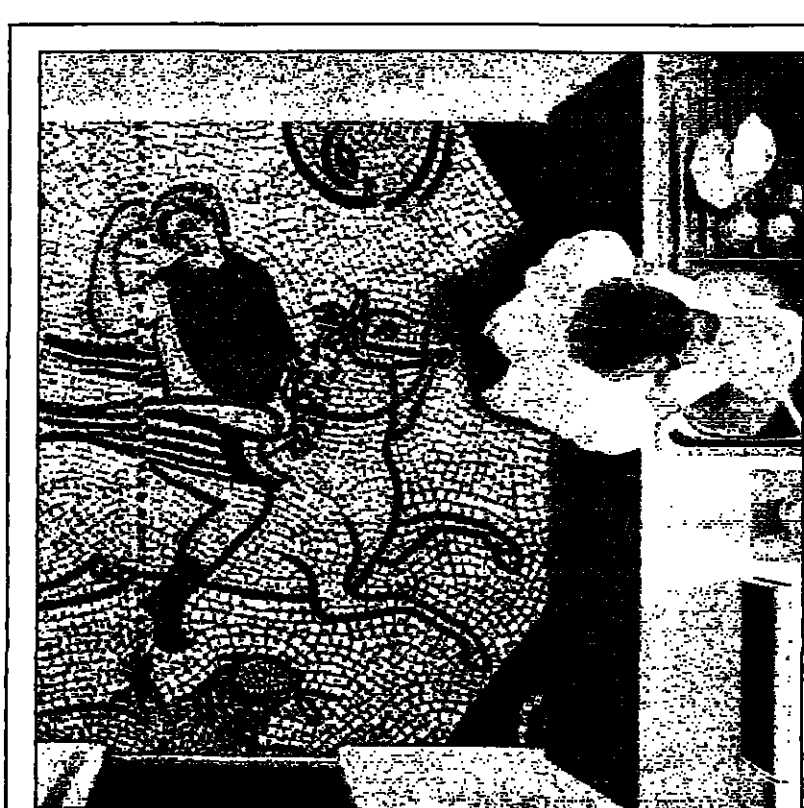
SPAIN votes on Sunday in the seventh general election since Franco died and polls forecast victory for the conservative Popular Party, its first since the restoration of democracy.

If, as predicted, José María Aznar leads his party to victory, Spain will cease to be the only country in postwar Western Europe never to have elected a conservative government. Felipe González, the Socialist Prime Minister for over 13 years, appears resigned. "Unemployment has hurt us, but what has damaged us most has been corruption," he said recently.

His campaign has lacked the rhetorical flourishes of old. Beset by corruption scandals, his party is divided and his Government was badly hit by revelations that it had run death squads against Basque separatists.

In spite of Señor González's considerable achievements — the consolidation of Spain's transition to democracy, the remarkable modernisation of its infrastructure, membership of Nato and the EU — the 30.5 million electorate is likely to punish him for economic stagnation and the highest unemployment in Europe, at 23 per cent.

Leading bankers and the employers' confederation are convinced Señor Aznar can get the country moving. He has promised not to raise taxes or cut welfare spending.



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Leading article, page 17

'I like acting for the underdogs and risk-takers'

While the Princess of Wales and her lawyer began sorting out her divorce settlement this week, I was busy engaged in discussions with the lawyer who acts for Tiggy Legge-Bourke.

It was Peter Carter-Ruck, you recall, who sent out that Christmas letter to newspapers advising them to ignore the malicious lies circulating about Miss Legge-Bourke — thereby alerting the world to the rumour, and prompting the *Daily Mirror* to publish and be damned.

"It was," says Mr Carter-Ruck, "a gross breach of good press practice to take my letter, which was marked 'private and confidential', and print it, inserting an illiterate misprint, on the front page."

Perhaps (who knows?) the rumour might have died a natural death; but Mr Carter-Ruck's view, and that of his client's family, was that steps had to be taken, since a tabloid had already telephoned the Palace about it.

During the Legge-Bourke problem, Mr Carter-Ruck had met the Princess's solicitor, Anthony Julius. "An inflexible character" in his view — he points out that since Mr Julius took over as senior partner, Mishcon de Reya has lost 11 solicitors, including several partners, to competitors — who will be a tough negotiator on Diana's behalf.

The solicitor plays a delicate role in our lives. It is one of the great ironies that the most emotional commitment we ever make — matrimony — may end in dust-dry settlements in a solicitor's office, arguing over who gets to keep the wedding spoons.

"But one of the great advantages of turning to a solicitor in times of trouble," Mr Carter-Ruck says, "is that any client can reveal everything in the complete confidence that it will not go any further."

In the week of his 82nd birthday, he is in fine fettle: strikingly straight-backed and lithe, ready to receive calls from those famous clients for whom, in time of trouble, the first thought is "get Carter-Ruck".

I approach him with a careful pen and a powerful

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



tape-recorder — his voice is a conspiratorial whisper, barely audible over the roar of traffic because even the most honourable among us knows how it feels to receive a letter which starts ominously "Dear Madam" and proceeds in the formulaic prose: "Our client, who as you know is a distinguished... is shocked by your offensive, gratuitous and defamatory references..." One's first reaction —

fury at the preening, posturing plaintiff — is followed by a heart-sinking realisation that months of time-wasting lie ahead. Whatever the outcome, the only person who really benefits is the lawyer.

"May I say, in defence of myself," he begins, "I used to defend newspapers." In his first libel case he defended a provincial editor who had alleged that the MP Bessie Braddock had danced a jig on the floor of the House of Commons. The elephantine Braddock might have been flattered to be thought able to jig; instead, she sued. Mr Carter-Ruck's first victory.

For years he acted on behalf of the *Express* and never paid out more than £2,000 in settlement. Now, all newspapers employ their own solicitors, and in consequence I find myself on the other side, acting for plaintiffs. I get quite a rough ride for that."

Mr Carter-Ruck's rough ride comes mostly from *Private Eye*, which invariably misprints his name. "Richard Ingrams says his great mis-

Peter Carter-Ruck, the libel lawyer *Private Eye* loves to hate, likes to point out that he used to defend newspapers. But not any more

'You must never say things that are untrue'

take was never giving me any work. Of course I would have acted for them, if they had come to me. I like acting for the underdog, and for journalists whose proprietors encourage them to take risks."

Once he even attended a *Private Eye* lunch, after he had written a letter to *The Times* advising Sir James Goldsmith against instituting criminal proceedings against *Private Eye*. It was a jolly lunch.

"It is very unfair of them to keep saying I am expensive. In fact I charge £250 an hour, while a lot of senior partners in City firms charge £400. And I am a very fast worker: I may have a half-hour meeting with a client, and get a letter sent off in 20 minutes." He also has to pay all his overheads. "As you see, I have no Queen Anne desk here." His office is modest and functional, in a modern building behind a pub in Shoe Lane, off Fleet Street.

He told me he had once stopped the late Michael VerMeulen from printing a damaging profile in *Tatler*, shown to him in advance, by threatening a libel writ. "He had asked my friends and colleagues for negative views of me. It is a tendency in the press today that if you are going to give a whole picture of a person you must be rather denigrating as well."

But wouldn't it be a sad business if one could write only charming things about people? "I accept that," he says, "but you must never say things that are untrue." He proffered further advice: "Never impute to anyone a state of mind. Never say, 'He made that statement knowing it to be untrue.' There wouldn't be a

hope of justification, because you could not prove it."

A newspaper recently stated in a profile that "he likes to let newspapers squirm for a while". (They also called him an expert baccarat player, a game he has hardly ever played.) Mr Carter-Ruck did not sue, but objects: "It is not my intention to make people squirm." "But they do squirm," I say. "But it is not my intention," he responds. "My intention is to bring people to terms, to organise an apology. If an apology is printed, we can settle amicably straight away for a modest sum and costs, and never go to proceedings. That I regard as success." He settles out of court in 90 per cent of cases.

Famous cases he has gone ahead with and lost — the Derek Jameson libel against the BBC, the long-reverberating *Spectator* suit by Bevan, Crossman and Phillips (allegedly drunk in Venice, "as indeed they were" — but it was the word of three Privy Counsellors against the word of an Italian waiter) were, he still believes, well-founded; only the outcome was regrettable.

His memoirs give many examples of floundering advocates mismatched in court with witnesses such as Randolph Churchill, who deployed dazzling sarcasm. Journalism and the law inhabit incompatible worlds: while we relish soundbites from libel actions (*Terre Blanche's* "enormous heaving white buttocks" spring to mind) we wince when a writer's amusing prose is ploddingly examined by Graggrind, QC. Carter-Ruck himself emerges as endearing Pooterish. Once, "I was fortunate in having an opportunity to meet Lord and Lady Beaverbrook," he writes. Lord B had to swear an affidavit at his villa in the South of France. Mr Carter-Ruck flew from Paris. "I took the precaution of buying a small pocket Bible at Smith's in Paris and took this with me. It was fortunate that I did because, surprisingly, it was found that there was indeed no Bible in the house."

Mr Carter-Ruck grew up with an upright, disciplinarian father. "When my sister and I misbehaved we would be put to bed for 24 hours on dry bread and water. But I didn't mind. Nor did he mind being caged at school. "One does need discipline."

Such rectitude sits uneasily in a world which (as Christo-



Peter Carter-Ruck settles out of court in 90 per cent of cases: "If an apology is printed, that I regard as success"

pher Hitchens says) no longer seems to recognise the concept of shame or disgrace: fraudsters sell their memoirs, and any notoriety is more glamorous than decent obscurity. Mr Carter-Ruck, author of the standard work on *Libel and Slander*, upholds the principle that if honour is at stake you are entitled to be judged by your fellow countrymen. "The unfairness is that when reputations are attacked, the damages are far too high, while damages for personal injury cases are far too low."

In the recent case of the doctor awarded £650,000 damages against the *Daily Mirror*, the judge had failed to give the jury guidance — yet it is 30 years since Mr Carter-Ruck, Lord Shawcross and Robert Alexander recommended that the Court of Appeal should have the right

to vary damages in libel cases. "One of my great criticisms of this country is that things move so slowly."

There is also the question of juries' competence in libel, since special juries were abolished. "If you're over 70 and a university professor you're not eligible; if you're 18 with no O levels you are." He remembers one libel jury, having retired to consider their verdict, coming back to ask for direction on the meaning of the word "defamation". "My counsel, Peter Rawlinson, turned to me and said: 'We're getting too old for this game.'"

The best advice on libel remains "Don't" — but its fatal attraction among the litigious

'I would pay 50 per cent tax if it went to help the homeless'

"I would not mind paying 50 per cent in tax if it were to help them. I'm a supporter of Shelter. Housing is a disgrace in this country. Macmillan built 350,000 houses in a year; last year we built 30,000. Under Macmillan we were one nation. Under the last two Governments we've become two nations, the very rich and the very poor, with the middle class suffering terribly."

Mr Carter-Ruck, happily married for 55 years, is an expert yachtsman, a veteran of the Fastnet, and happens to be gifted in dowsing with a hazel twig. The death of his son Brian in 1973 was the worst time in his life; he cannot talk about it. He and his daughter Julie had a "most unfortunate" falling-out when she left his partnership to join Lord Mishcon, but they are now reconciled. "Julie is very much like me, a lot of drive and energy, first-class in a crisis."

Do not suppose that he has no sense of humour. The cartoons on his wall include one of a client telling his lawyers: "I want you bunch of thieving shysters to defend me on a slander charge." And off he went, smiling, to take his staff to the Wig and Pen Club for birthday champagne.

"Between a third and a half of all cancers are caused by eating the wrong types of food"

Food for Thought

by

Vernon Coleman

If you know which foods to eat — and which to avoid — you can dramatically reduce your chances of developing cancer of the breast, cancer of the prostate, cancer of the colon, cancer of the ovary or cancer of the uterus.

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NO-NONSENSE VEHICLES.

Philip Howard



■ PC is a cliché, but there is an older version, which has educated a generation

In the acronym jungle, PC is the abbrev. that stamped. Its other significations — Privy Counsellor, postcard, PC Plod and personal computer — are trampled. For the fashionable PC is the shorthand for the hyperactive euphemism that refers to Eskimos as Aleuts, and renames *Ten Little Niggers* first as *Ten Little Indians* and then *A Round Number of Vertically Challenged Persons*.

An older meaning of PC is for the imprint that made classics, by a paradox of that slippery word, popular as well as useful. Penguin Classics are marking their 50th anniversary with a catalogue of 800 titles. This has their characteristic black spine and a romantic picture (*The Questioner of the Sphinx* by Elihu Vedder) on the cover. Unlike other catalogues, it is a book to keep. In our rat-race of modern publishing, one does not flatter the opposition. And like every other human institution, Penguin Classics is worthy of improvement. As with all series, the pages turn yellow and fall out faster than they used to. The prices have risen faster than those of Mars bars and (some) newspapers — to pick a barcode at a venture. A fat PC can cost more than a compact disc, and then not fit into your pocket unless you are wearing a Puffer. And it is NC or nationalist correctness for the catalogue to include a section called "British" literature. So, Boswell and Walter Scott were Scots. But the language they wrote in was English.

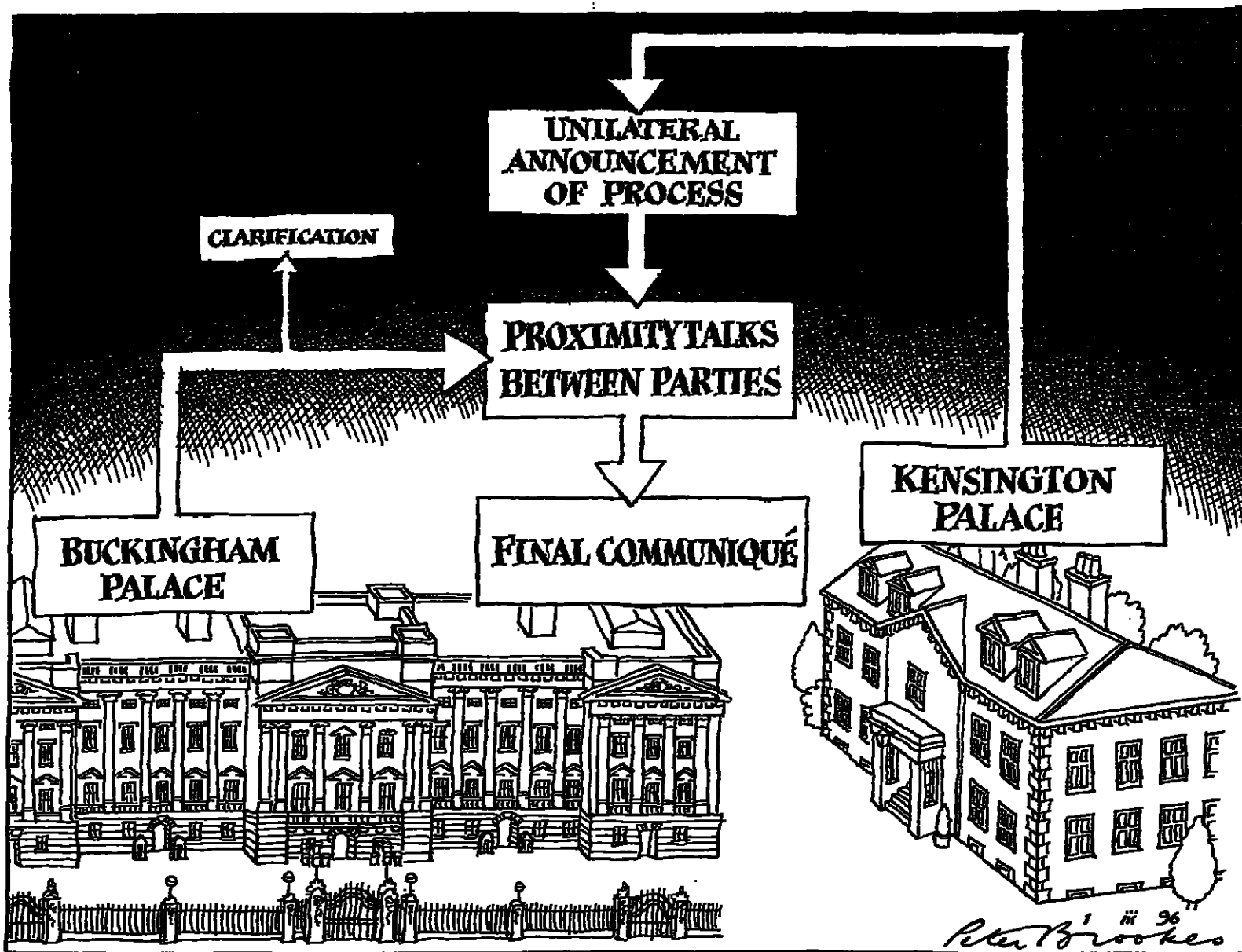
That is enough carping to indicate that this is macho journalism, not advertorial. E.V. Rieu's baby, launched with his translation of the *Iliad* done with the crash of V2 explosions all round, was a noble venture. It proclaimed that the classics were books that anyone — everyone — could, and should read. They were no longer the exclusive province of the privileged elite. Rieu's contemporaries at the Athenaeum mocked him for providing cribs for Flashmen who could not construe. But Rieu saw the point that even in translation, classics are eternal treasures for all. And as Latin and Greek faded from education, Rieu's assistant and successor, Betty Radice, stiffened up the scholarship so that PCs could be used for teaching as well as pleasure.

Classic is a PC word. It started life describing the upper class at Rome, below which the other classes were proletarian. In the Middle Ages, Classics described Latin and Greek, because they were considered superior to vernaculars, and were taught in the "class-room". Classical music can describe music composed between 1730 and 1830, the antithesis of Romantic, or established music, or be used loosely in antithesis to popular.

In the hurly-burly of daily journalism, it is useful to project an instant air of omniscience. The best source for the instant reference from literature, to add an air of authority to an otherwise bald and unconvincing argument, is the appropriate PC. I find John Mandeville's purple travels good copy for mocking the travel-puffing trade. For less trivial purposes, Penguin Classics open windows on literature that would otherwise remain shut. I fell into reading Flaubert in French from reviewing the Penguin Classic of *Salammbo*.

Translation is an art halfway between poetry and linguistic philosophy. Until the Romantic movement, great poets considered translating the treasures of the past part of their art. Since Rieu and Radice went for scholars who could also sing, Penguin Classics have been brilliant at finding translators who are poets not pedants. David West's *Aeneid*, Nessim Dawood turning the *Koran* into English instead of hieratic gobbledegook, Trevor Saunders Penguinifying the covert poetry of Plato, Richard Stoneman resurrecting the *Alexander Romance*, Martin Hammond shining new fire onto the hardest of all (the *Iliad*), Michael Grant and their peers — they are the unrecognised educators of new generations.

PC is a cliché. But we know the older and more useful version of PC. May the series run for ever, continually recreating the past. Of course it will. PCs have contributed more to public education and the joy of nations than any other series. If you were allowed books of only one series on that desert island, what other choice could there be?



Most interested? Not me

The thing that is destroying the Royal Family — and our respect — is that they cannot keep their mouths shut

Bernard Levin

I never thought much of Bagehot, and now I think even less of him, for saying "Royalty is a government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting actions". Maybe, but for the time being, and probably for a good deal longer, we shall pine for something — anything — interesting.

I have not asked the entire nation what it thinks about the latest royal hoo-ha, and I certainly do not intend to do so. To tell the truth, when the most recent royal hoo-ha broke out, I was greatly tempted to go at once to Easter Island and stay there, not least because most of the figures in that fascinating place would be much more likely to provide interesting and amusing conversation than the people in the said royal hoo-ha.

No, I am not advocating a republic, not only because Michael Howard would inevitably be found wriggling into a cushy place. I am not even saying that in general I am not particularly interested in any of the members of the Royal Family (though I am not). But it is the people — nay, almost the entire nation — who have behaved badly. Harsh.

It is a platitude to say that the newspapers, all of them, give the public what the public wants. That, of course, is where the public is shockingly two-faced; it laps up the juiciest scandals and then berates the papers which it so gleefully reads. And that two-faced attitude is mirrored exactly in what the public, lapping it all up, demands from the royals. Yesterday's *Sun* included seven full pages of royals; the *Daily Mail* had six pages; the *Telegraph* clocked up some two pages. The *Times* itself had one-and-a-half (plus yet another sermon), though *The Independent* almost lived up to the proud boast it made when its pages first hit the counter — that it would ignore the doings, comings and goings of the royals — by devoting only one page to them.

Let us take a look at the felling of those hundreds of tall, handsome trees which, when they were standing high, had no inkling of their fate.

From the *Mail* we got, "Exclusive: The secret tea time that sealed Diana's fate".

From the *Sun* we got, "Diana's Divorce Victory", and a great deal more, not least "You've done the right thing, Di".

From the *Telegraph* came "I agree to divorce, says Princess", plus "Break agreed, the dealing begins, but Princess refuses to go quietly". (That one had to be stretched right across two pages.)

The *Indy*, with a touching salute to the past, put the entire Di bit at the bottom of the page (and then spoiled the whole thing by adding "Relaunch for the queen of hearts", plus "Those treasured moments").

As for us, we were as modest as could reasonably be, with nothing more exciting than "Princess agrees to divorce". (Well, yes.)

Now then: let us go back to those tall, handsome trees. Was it really necessary to chop them down, turn them into pulp and drop them on the doorstep?

In my opinion, it was not.

Do you know how and when the royals saw the writing on the wall? (Or didn't, actually.) For there was a specific time, and more to the point, there was a particular man, of whom it can truly be said that he, more than any other, destroyed the royals. It was he who persuaded them to take part in *Royal Family*, their first intimate television documentary. I believe that he was an Australian by the name of Heseltine, and that he was doing his best. But it was he, I profoundly believe, who induced the Royal Family to step down from the clouds in which they had been enwrapped. It was a noble gesture — no, not a gesture, for he was truly doing what he thought would cause a strengthening of the Royal Family — but he might as well have put a bomb beneath the Throne. Or else, you well-doer from under the world, it would have been better if you had dug a deep, deep hole and put yourself into it.

Was there no one to stop the avalanche? Apparently, no; everyone thought it a tremendous wheeze. But it wasn't, because, you see, the whole point

of royalty — the whole point — is that it should be clouded in a mist of centuries and never shown plainly. Come, is there anywhere in Buckingham Palace — perhaps on a dusty shelf — a copy of Shakespeare? And if so, has anyone recently opened it pages? Because:

Upon the king! let us our lives, our souls, Our debts, our careful wives, Our children and our sins lay on the king! We must bear all. O hard condition! Twin-born with greatness, subject to the breath

Of every fool, whose sense no more can feel But his own wringing. What infinite heart's ease Must kings neglect that private men enjoy! And what have kings that privates have not too,

Save ceremony, save general ceremony? And what art thou, thou idle ceremony? What kind of god art thou, that suffer'st more Of mortal griefs than do thy worshippers? What are thy rents? what are thy comings-in? O ceremony! show me but thy worth: What is thy soul of adoration? Art thou aught else but place, degree, and form,

Creating awe and fear in other men? Wherein thou art less happy, being feared, Than they in fearing. What drinks't thou out, instead of homage sweet, But poison'd flattery? O! be sick, great greatness, And bid thy ceremony give thee cure.

There are some who argue that it was not the opening that did for the royals, but the creatures that crawled out afterwards. There is much in the argument that when you put a vulgarian like Fergie into a palace — a real palace — everybody should realise that sooner or later she will wipe her boots on the curtains. Nevertheless, I reject that powerful claim.

For no one can deny that through all the centuries there have been some who wiped their boots on the curtains. Glance down the columns and the centuries. Do you think that in the royal pal-

aces there has been no nookie, just because royalty sat at the end of the table? Do you really think that because it was several hundred years ago, nobody bugged the pageboys? Or vomited over a too strict clergyman? Or went mad?

What's the difference? Take a tiny breath and you will know it instantly. No, it is not a matter of money, or of position, or of intellect: the thing that is destroying the Royal Family is that for the first time in history, the people in and around that family cannot shut their mouths. Everything that is happening in and around the royals has been done for centuries, but until now nobody knew. Do you know when I realised that the royals are done for? It was a very long time ago, and you will shrug and say nonsense. But pick up any issue of the *Sun* and turn to the cartoons: Look at them closely; you don't have to laugh. But what you have to see is the caricature of the Queen. It is *always* the same, and the same is a sour-mouthed ear-flapping ridiculous figure.

Anyone who has been anywhere near the Queen, or seen her reasonably close-up, or looked at real photographs of her, will see that she looks nothing whatever like it. (Henry VIII would instantly have the "artists" head cut off, but we don't do it this way now.) I am not saying that it is wicked or shameful to caricature the Queen in that way; I am not saying that a bit of scribble hurts the Queen. I am saying that only a handful of years ago, nobody would have thought of caricaturing her in this way. And what does that mean? It means that the public no longer cares. And when anything up to ten and a half million readers of *The Sun* (yes, those are the numbers, and they are certified by the independent Audit Bureau of Circulation) have stopped caring, the down end of the see-saw is very unlikely ever to come up again.

Of course, the Royal Family will still be there (it will be somewhat trimmed when Blair gets going), and it will carry out its usual functions, and it will never again be a held up as something that people might steer by.

And there is another aspect, which I think nobody has yet examined closely. David Starkey, who seems to know a good deal about these matters, says:

Twenty or 30 years from now everyone will have forgotten Princess Diana. She will have joined the list of clapped-out celebrities living in California.

To make it really sure — not California, but Easter Island.

Blairism stripped bare

David Willetts on his Labour shadow, Peter Mandelson

Far from a work of rigorous political thought, Peter Mandelson and Roger Liddle's *The Blair Revolution* is a spin-doctor's book, a mere exercise in rhetoric. There is indeed a ruthless political intelligence at work, but it is employed ducking and weaving around the difficult questions which any serious book would wish to confront.

The first chapter might sound good delivered from a public platform, but in print the verbal tricks are all too obvious. The authors can only bring any life to their idea of the new Left by describing what it is not. It emerges as a series of negatives. We are told it is a matter not of high taxation or low taxation but of "fair taxation". We are also told that it is not a matter of public sector or private sector, but of partnership between the two. Nowhere does *The Blair Revolution* then investigate what this fair structure of taxation would look like, or what the public sector's responsibilities in these partnerships would be. There is no point in moving on from soundbites to a 200-page book if you are unable to address such questions.

The authors put their emotional energy into internal Labour Party arguments. The key distinction between their socialism and that of the old Left is their belief in equality of opportunity instead of equality of outcome. Given the significance of equality for British socialists, one might have expected them to devote some space to exploring the distinction carefully. But having claimed to support equality of opportunity, they move on with suspicious haste: we are left with merely a cliché.

There are deep issues here which the authors really ought to address. Some of the social and economic changes of the past few years which the book denounces as products of Thatcherism may actually be the results of the equality of opportunity which they claim to believe in. A more meritocratic society is unlikely to be one in which earnings become ever more equal. A more mobile society is not necessarily a more equal one. Great opportunities for women have opened up in the past 15 years, and as highly paid women tend to marry highly paid men, this equalising of opportunity has contributed to the wider range of household incomes which the authors criticise. Such issues receive what George Brown would have called "a complete ignominy".

The touchstone for judging political beliefs in this country is still economics. It is significant that the authors still hanker after some sort of pay policy, a long-term hobbyhorse of Roger Liddle. "Government must take a view of the acceptable level of pay rises in the economy as a whole," says the book. "and ensure business and the trade unions understand the employment implications of decisions they take."

Mandelson and Liddle's discussion of industrial policy opens with a crucial observation which makes many of the subsequent remarks redundant. The book says that "periodic surges in inflation have been largely responsible for the UK's poor industrial performance", and recognise that high and variable interest rates explain the way British industry has been financed with little long-term fixed-interest borrowing. Low and stable prices are the solution, not Will Hutton's heavy-handed and intrusive implications of decisions they take.

While Labour would pander to the chattering classes with constitutional reforms that have very little to commend them, its deepest wish is for a "strengthening of the centre of government", with more power in the Prime Minister's office. Explanation is to be found in the book's fear that "there will be intense pressure from multifarious interest groups, who will immediately look to a new government to offer them a better deal". The authors want to find organisational solutions to what would be a major political problem for an incoming Labour government.

Yet this very book is an example of how serious that problem is. The authors are careful to avoid too many explicit public spending commitments, but this merely leads them to try to pander to interest groups in other ways. They are as free with tax reliefs as Labour used to be with spending promises. They also offer new laws and regulations to help their favourite causes, which do not count as part of the government's budget at all, but have a real economic cost. They would take us further towards the Euro-sclerosis of some of those continental countries which Mandelson and Liddle appear to admire.

Tony Blair's most effective rhetorical device is his appeal to community. The authors share this habit, but fail to explain what this fashionable expression means in practice. There is a story of one of their heroes, John Ruskin, as a boy, standing on a chair in his parents' fine house and gathering the servants to say to them "be good". If the authors had their way and a Labour government tried to operate in the spirit of Ruskin, we would find ourselves with a series of fussy and meddlesome interventions, with which the British people would soon lose patience.

The author is Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of Public Service.

Mug's game

THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S decision to relinquish the title "Her Royal Highness" has devastated those who peddle royal souvenirs. Millions of pounds are spent every year on cups, mugs, postcards and other paraphernalia decorated with the Princess of Wales's face. And most of the ephemera accord the Princess her full title of HRH.

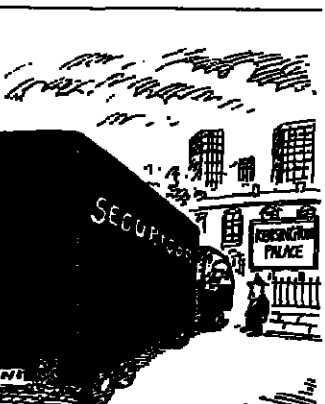
The postcard industry says it will cost a fortune to rid Diana of the three little letters. Andrew McGarrick, managing director of J. Arthur Dixon, the country's biggest card manufacturer, says he will have to reprint ten different cards featuring the Princess and her full title. "It will cost thousands," he says. "It's particularly unwelcome at this time of year, because the peak sales season is about to begin."

Nello Benacci, who owns a postcard distribution company with more than a hundred outlets in London, took delivery this week of 40,000 cards with the full title on them. "I may have to pulp them," he says. Then, plangently: "Do you think I'll be sued if I carry on selling them?"

The long-term effects of the divorce are also causing concern.

"The true result of these shenanigans is a diminution of the Royal Family and any commercial value they might have," says Kevin Farrell, director of the British Ceramic Confederation.

Richard Branson was put in his place the other day. Out on the streets of London filming with the American motor-mouth Ruby Wax, he was approached by a young couple. "Can we have a



"Divorce settlement for the Princess"

picture?" they asked. "Of course," replied Branson and Wax, only too delighted to pose, all smiles. "No, no," said the couple. "Could you take a photograph of us?"

Look closer

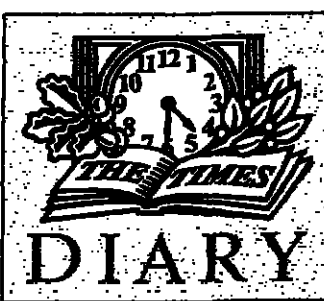
LIFE HAS become even tougher for British spies than we thought with end of the Cold War. News comes from Iran that one of them, a young woman, has spent the past three years in a seminary in the holy city of Qom disguised as a student — of the male disposition.

My own spies tell me that the amazing feat was disclosed in a broadcast by Ayatollah Mohammed Jannadi, one of the country's most influential clerical figures, which cautioned the faithful to beware of infiltrators.

"When they first told me," said the ayatollah, "I thought they were joking. When they convinced me it was true, I nearly grew horns. For three whole years, she kept her sex secret and spied on us."

Absent friends

WHERE was Tony Blair at the launch party on Wednesday night of *The Blair Revolution*: Can New Labour Deliver?, the unofficial manifesto co-written by his sidekick Peter Mandelson? Nay,



where were all the Labour MPs we had expected?

I'm told that Blair had intended to go, but was detained at the Commons. Running late, he skipped the party for the theatre — apparently it was *An Ideal Husband* at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket. The absence of red ties and roses was the talk of the party. "I can hardly see a Labour MP in the room," gloated the Liberal Democrat grandee Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank.

Frankly...

STAGE WHISPERS reach me from the RSC's Barbican bunker about events leading up to the opening of Simon Callow's interminable and widely reviled production of *Les Enfants du Paradis*. The suggestion is that not until a couple of weeks before the first

night did the RSC ask permission to stage the show at all from the French company that owns the rights. As a result, the French are said to have been able to charge an enormous fee — £90,000 has been mentioned.

Cashing in

IN BANGKOK yesterday, John Major was in frivolous form at a reception held by Standard Chartered Bank, his former employer. He said he had been sent to Nigeria by the bank in the 1960s because he was deemed "entirely expendable".

The happy mood then continued at an impromptu meeting with Chancellor Kohl. He donned a shiny black shirt which wouldn't have disgraced John Travolta, while the vast German sported a shimmering aquamarine number befitting an Abba groupie.

Yes today

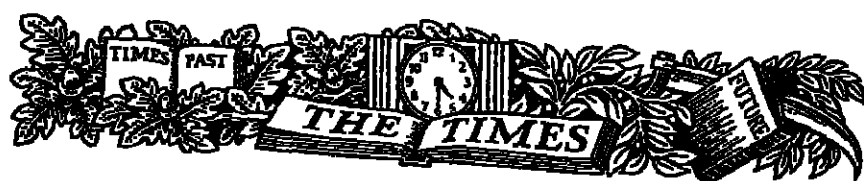
THE BBC has stepped back a decade or two to woo punters for its general election coverage. It has picked Rick Wakeman, the hairy keyboard player and former frontman for the hippy ensemble Yes, to compose its election music. Visiting the studio recently, he grunted: "It's just like an old Yes set."



Yes man: Rick Wakeman

A former Yes stage designer remembers fondly: "The sets were designed to be ambiguous," he says. "to be like landscapes at times and alive at others — like — surreal — man." The swingometer will be, er, swinging on election night.

P.H.S



FULTON, REVISITED

Churchill's words look no less wise today

Fifty years ago next week, an old man, out of office, arrived in the Midwest by special train, accompanied by the President of the United States. Harry Truman's decision to travel across America with Winston Churchill and to introduce his speech at Fulton, Missouri, was a remarkable gesture of respect — and the act of a shrewd grassroots politician. In 1946, Churchill's personal standing with the American public stood so high that, as *The Times* reported, the route from the station in Jefferson City to Fulton was "gay with pennants, flags and balloons". But the speech itself irritated Washington almost as much as it embarrassed the Attlee Government at home.

To the Cold War generation, Churchill's depiction of an "iron curtain" that had descended across Europe, "from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic" may read as the statement, however eloquent, of a truth so obvious as to be banal. That was far from the case in 1946; both in rapidly demobilising America and in war-ravaged Europe, there was immense reluctance to contemplate the rise of a fresh totalitarian menace.

When Truman presented Churchill to the Fulton audience, he put him in precisely the same bracket as Stalin, as "leaders in a world that needs leadership" — adding for good measure that he had become "very fond of both of them". In Britain, too, where people understood that, but for the Red Army, the war could have been lost before America was drawn in, Stalin's brutal methods had not yet extinguished Russia's credit as wartime liberator.

It was not, therefore, popular to assert that the Soviet aim was "the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines" and that what Stalin was creating in Eastern Europe was not just a Soviet sphere of influence but a system of total control, through Communist police states which threatened to spread from Warsaw and Budapest through the war-weakened democracies of Western Europe. Truman refused, at the time, to associate himself with any such thesis. But Churchill achieved his purpose: he sounded the alert that was to produce, in the three years that followed his speech, the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and Nato.

Time has obscured still more deeply the logic of Churchill's other grand theme at

Fulton: his plea for "a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States", a relationship which he wished to see expressed not just in political but military terms and even, eventually, in "common citizenship". Without such a "fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples", the old man insisted, there could be no "sure prevention of war". At the time many Americans, thoroughly conscious that they had emerged from the war a superpower and Britain as a pauper, dismissed this plea as an old warrior's anachronism. As a phrase, the "special relationship" has received harsher treatment with each decade's passing.

In 1946 Churchill well understood that, where Britain was concerned, far from knocking on a door ajar, he was putting a foot in a door that appeared to be closing. India was one bone of contention; money was another. Lendlease had been abruptly terminated at the war's end, and there was no certainty that the fresh loan Britain was then seeking would scrape through a Congress unpersuaded of the case for financing the Attlee Government's socialist experiment.

The point that he wished to drum home in Fulton was that democracy was by no means entrenched on the European continent. The future of Italy, as he said, hung in the balance. France, the key in Churchill's eyes to European regeneration, was weakened by postwar recriminations and unrest, actively fomented by the Communists. Unless America could be drawn back to Europe, Churchill foresaw a return to a "quivering, precarious balance of power" which would tempt Moscow to "a trial of strength".

Churchill knew that America was interested in Europe only as part of the Rooseveltian grand design for a global structure for peace based on the new United Nations. He was convinced that this would not be enough. He was right. He was also the only European whose eloquence and stature gave him a chance of being listened to. In Fulton on that March day, he did not prevail. He did something that mattered more: he introduced to the American people the case for the joint Western defence of democracy that, with America's strength, was to prevail in the Cold War to come.

THE SECOND TRANSITION

Aznar would be good for Spain, and Europe

If Spanish voters grasp their moment and eject the present incumbent from his office in the Moncloa, Spain will at last have a Prime Minister with whom Britain can do business. The country votes on Sunday and José María Aznar's Popular Party is expected to win comfortably. Let us hope so, for Spanish democracy, Europe's most fragile by far, can scarcely afford for Señor Aznar to lose.

Spain, misgoverned and misled by the Socialist Party of Felipe González, needs change today almost as keenly as at General Franco's death. Then, as now, the country had to make a transition; now, as then, it needs new values. Twenty years have elapsed since the caudillo was buried, and Spain remains the only democracy in Western Europe never to have elected a conservative central Government. Franco's ghost endured, until now, that "the Right" was a force to be feared.

"Venga la Derecha" — "the Right is coming" — was the warning with which mothers sent naughty children scurrying to bed, and with which Señor González repeatedly scared Spaniards into voting for his party. This fear robbed Señor Aznar of victory in 1993. The Socialists have tried it this time too, but Señor Aznar appears determined to bury Franco's ghost: his countrymen will assist him to do so. Weary, unable any more to digest the venality of their rulers, the voters yearn for change.

Yet this change will not be restricted to Spain alone. Victory for Señor Aznar should also have a telling impact on Europe. The

austere former tax inspector is a Spanish nationalist with whom John Major might make common cause. Expect Spain under Señor Aznar to behave like a proud, adult country, prepared to stand up for its own interests. Some of this will make life uncomfortable for Britain: Madrid's views on the common agricultural policy, fisheries and Gibraltar will raise tensions. But a Spain that can say "no", and does say "no", makes it easier for Britain to say "no" too. National interests may not overlap, but a commitment to their protection should.

Unlike Señor González, who jumped when told to jump by the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, Señor Aznar has promised to flex Spanish muscle at the forthcoming inter-governmental conference. "I cannot conceive of a stable European Union," he said in a recent interview, "without the basic consensus of the four great nations, Great Britain, Germany, France and Spain, and eventually Italy." He has, happily, promised not to accept any change in the way in which the Council of Ministers takes its decisions: majority voting is not to his taste.

This is all promising, and the British Government should waste no time in seeking his support in the battle against the federalist advance. Spain is a "Europhile" nation: membership of the EU is perceived to have delivered it from authoritarianism, and there is truth in the perception. But Señor Aznar will not allow this historical gratitude to dull his keen sense of nation.

PLAY UP, YOU UNDERDOGS

On cricket's uncertainty principle, David can beat Goliath

Giant-killers are as popular in the real world as in sport and fiction, which mimic it. Neutrals shout for David against Goliath, and for Laurence Olivier or Kenneth Branagh at Agincourt. For underdogs can sometimes win. The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. That, however, is the way to bet, especially in a sport as complex and professional as cricket.

For Kenya to thrash the West Indies at cricket is a story too far-fetched even for Greyfriars. The sensation has stunned even reckless punters. Ladbrokes had not taken a bet on them. And the West Indies found backers even as 50-1 on favourites.

So now try selling this as the plot for a cricketing fiction about a breathless hush in the Pune Close tonight. The outsiders are amateurs from a country not before heard of for cricket. Their non-existent chances have been reduced by pre-match squabbles about allowances that the richer teams receive as beer money and selection of allegedly overweight Indians instead of Africans. Their captain is an insurance salesman who taught himself to play with a stick and a ball through the eye of a needle. His ambition for the World Cup is to be on the same pitch as the West Indian superstar, Brian Lara, for his autograph.

The West Indies win the toss and bowl out Kenya for 166. So far, so plausible. But now things become ridiculous. Paric runs through the West Indies order, as it can in the most battle-hardened sides. Brian Lara goes for only eight. The Kenyan captain takes three wickets for 15 with his innocuous-looking off-breaks, and West Indies are dismissed for a pitiful 93. And if Kenya can now beat Sri Lanka, they will reach the finals, and the West Indies will be out.

At this point the sports editor shakes his head: "You must be joking." It is true that the West Indies were routed for 25 by Ireland in 1969, but the wicket was wet and green, and the leprechauns in their courses fought against the Windies tired after an exhausting tour. But at international sport Kenya's thunderclap is as gloriously absurd as the USA beating England or North Korea beating Italy at football in its World Cup.

Accordingly today all except the West Indies cheer for the underdogs, and the spectacular entry of Black Africa to the cricket pitches of the world. Everyone thrills for the game at which David can sometimes beat Goliath by will to win, character, keeping the eye on the ball and a bit of luck. Why, with a touch of Kenya's Agincourt spirit, England could reach the World Cup final. But preferably not against Kenya.

Legal aid and the 'undeserving'

From His Honour
Sir Jonathan Clarke

Sir, Many people are incensed at the use of public money to fund what they perceive to be an unworthy individual pursuing a legal action which has doubtful merit ("Legal aid stopped for shot robber who is suing police", report, February 29).

The Legal Aid Board may find little reason for refusing legal assistance to anybody who can demonstrate that he has a claim with reasonable prospects of success in court, and that he is within the financial limits of their means test. The Lord Chancellor might therefore care to consider amending the legal aid scheme to incorporate a provision similar to that found in the criminal injuries compensation scheme (under which significant sums of public money are paid out to victims of crimes of violence).

Paragraph 6(c) of that scheme enables the compensation board at its discretion to reduce — or to withhold altogether — compensation where the applicant's conduct or his character as shown by his previous convictions makes such an award inappropriate. The public may feel that when someone has already cost the State a great deal of money, perhaps in the detection of his crime, his court appearances, and, in some cases, maintaining him in prison, it is not appropriate to bestow yet more public money on him, however justified his claim might otherwise be.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN CLARKE,
The Farmers Club,
3 Whitehall Court, SW1.
February 29.

Juries and justice

From Mr Ronald Thwaites, QC

Sir, When judges past and present offer improvements to the criminal justice system and make proposals to help defendants (letters, February 22, 26), it is often necessary to read between the lines. The rule against routine disclosure of criminal convictions has nothing to do with trusting the jury but everything to do with avoiding unnecessary prejudice so that a man may have a fair trial.

The fact that a defendant has been in trouble before is not evidence of his guilt in a later case and therefore is not logically or legally relevant to the issues. In certain circumstances, for example, when a defendant through his counsel attacks the character of prosecution witnesses, the law provides that his previous convictions may be disclosed by the prosecution to the jury with leave of the judge. If the defence is silent about the defendant's past and the prosecution cannot introduce it, there is of course a danger that the jury might conclude that his record is worse than it is. It is a common dilemma which defence lawyers have to confront with the defendant himself.

At present, what is fair for the individual defendant is usually a matter to be explored and determined by his legal team. The position is unlikely to be improved by a change in the law that gives the prosecution the automatic right to use a defendant's past in order to remove his future.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD THWAITES,
10 King's Bench Walk, Temple, EC4.
February 28.

From Mr Kevin Bays

Sir, Your correspondents, Judge Peter Smith (February 20) and Mr Peter Mason, QC (February 26), question the principle of concealing a defendant's previous convictions in jury trials.

We are considering a case in which a trial judge refused to allow a spent previous conviction for dishonesty to be put to a prosecution witness who had been allowed to assert total honesty. The accused has an unblemished reputation. There is little other material evidence in the case.

Perhaps the law ought to be changed to conform with the principles of natural justice so that all relevant material, including a witness's record for honesty, is fully canvassed.

Yours faithfully,
KEVIN BAYS,
Davenport Lyons (solicitors),
1 Old Burlington Street, W1.
February 26.

From Mr Keith George

Sir, Mr Giles Curtis-Raleigh (letter, February 26) mentions that the standard appearance fee for barristers in most legal-aid cases is £45.75, plus VAT. This falls somewhat short of painting the full picture.

A standard appearance fee is paid for attendances which are not recompensed by a basic (brief) fee, or refresher fees paid for effective trials. Almost invariably, the fee is paid for short hearings, which comprise only part of a barrister's busy day. It would not be unheard of for a barrister to represent clients at as many as five or six short hearings in one day, and consequently receive five or six standard appearance fees. That might result in payment of approximately £250 (plus VAT) for an hour's work.

Fees paid to barristers bear no comparison with jurors' allowances. Yours faithfully,
K. GEORGE,
12 Glanvorn Grove, Newport, Gwent.
February 26.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Dangers of bulk oil transportation

From Professor Sir Bernard Crossland, FEng, FRS

Sir, I suggest that the proposed inquiry into the salvage operation on the *Sea Empress* is insufficient in view of the calamitous environmental damage which has been caused (letters, February 23, 28). What is needed is a much more searching inquiry into the safety of bulk transport of oil.

It has to be recognised that the bulk transport of oil in very large tankers is a proven environmental hazard. The need for double-hull construction, twin independent propulsion engines, duplication of the steering gear, adequate certification and inspection, and crew training and communication, all need to be examined.

Perhaps even more importantly, it needs to be questioned if it is accept-

able to transport oil in such large vessels, and whether it would not be advisable to employ smaller and more manoeuvrable tankers, which in emergencies would be more readily controllable by tugs.

It will, of course, be argued that what is implied by the matters I have raised would, if implemented, significantly increase the cost of transport. This ignores the environmental cost when, as too often, disaster strikes. The true cost to the environment, as in the present case, cannot be fully compensated and the local communities will have to live with it for many years.

Yours faithfully,
BERNARD CROSSLAND,
16 Malone Court, Belfast.
February 28.

Mopping up after tanker disaster

From Mr Piers Bradburn

Sir, I read Nigel Hawkes's article on the ecological impact of the stranding of the *Sea Empress* ("An oily drop in the ocean", February 22) with distaste. Agreed, nature has a remarkable ability to recover from man-made disasters, and man's efforts to mop up afterwards can have a detrimental effect, but to suggest that 70,000 tonnes of crude tipped into the sea is inconsequential indicates monumental complacency.

Why is it asking too much to demand that tankers don't go aground, or if they do then spillages should be minimised? Had Donaldson's recommendations in the wake of the 1993 Braer disaster been fully implemented, the salvage operation would certainly not have proved so difficult. Are profit margins so tight in the oil industry that adequate safety precautions cannot be afforded?

I challenge Mr Hawkes to visit the south Pembrokeshire coast in "a few months" and report that the evidence of the spill has in fact largely disappeared. I fear that natural habitats, and local livelihoods in an area struggling to rebuild itself economically, will actually take some while longer to recover.

Yours faithfully,
PIERS N. BRADBURN,
56 Grove Road,
Hitchin, Hertfordshire.
February 22.

From Mr R. C. H. Genochio

Sir, Having been peripherally involved in the response to the oil spill from the *Exxon Valdez* in 1989, I enjoyed Nigel Hawkes's robust account of the capacity of the sea to self-remediate, over time, the pollution which has

been inflicted upon it by the *Sea Empress*. However, even the ocean can use a little help from its friends and insofar as that help can come from bacteria and dispersants Mr Hawkes's views were perhaps too cautious.

First, it should be recognised that there are dispersants which are degradable by bacteria. Second, there are detergents whose use is either compatible with, or can even facilitate, bacterial metabolism and growth.

Greater clarity concerning the procedures for approving the use of dispersants and bacterial products at sea would stimulate their availability for responsible and fruitful use, since this is an area of expertise in which several British companies have a considerable reputation.

Yours faithfully,
R. C. H. GENOCHIO
(Managing Director),
Oil Cleaning Bio-Products Ltd,
PO Box 46, Royston, Hertfordshire.

From Mr Denis Watkins

Sir, Nigel Hawkes reassures us that our concern about the effects of the spillage from the *Sea Empress* is unfounded. He also says that, "There is nothing like an oiled bird for getting to the parts of the brain that more mundane forms of fundraising cannot reach."

As we watch the sea birds on our coast flopping in the oily slime it isn't only the brain that is being reached — it is also the heart. I am sorry that Mr Hawkes appears to be so unaffected by the plight of these creatures.

Yours faithfully,
DENIS WATKINS,
Ty Newydd,
Velindre, Crmymch, Dyfed.
February 23.

Divorce Bill

From the Parliamentary Secretary,
Lord Chancellor's Department

Sir, Nigella Lawson's feature ("A cruel divorce trick to play on the children", February 21), and Alan Coren's ("Your Dad's nicer than my Dad...") in the same issue, were both based on a false premise. Ms Lawson stated that a government amendment to the Family Law Bill will propose that children should be able to ask courts to block their parents' divorce, while Mr Coren said that a proposed amendment to the same Bill would invite children to "chuck a spanner into their parents' divorce proceedings if these did not suit their interests".

The government amendment would not allow children themselves to apply for an order barring their parents' divorce.

The effect of the amendment as drafted would be to allow a spouse to apply for an order preventing divorce on the grounds that dissolution of the marriage would result in substantial financial or other hardship to that

spouse or a child of the family. In such cases the court will look for objective evidence that dissolution would result in substantial hardship. Such decisions would not therefore depend upon the wishes or views of a child.

In cases where the court is looking at questions relating to where the child will live after divorce or how much contact that child should have with a non-resident parent, it is clear from the Children Act that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance. In these cases the Children Act provides that the court must take account of the child's ascertainable wishes and feelings in the light of the child's age and understanding.

In appropriate cases the court will order a welfare report or a judge may even interview a child, subject again to that child's age and understanding.

Yours sincerely,
JONATHAN EVANS,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Lord Chancellor's Department,
Selborne House,
54-60 Victoria Street, SW1.
February 28.

US and Cuba

From Mr Nicholas Angel

Sir, The US Government is imposing fresh sanctions against Cuba in retaliation for the shooting down of two American Cessnas shortly after they entered Cuban air space (reports, February 29).

Fresh sanctions? Retaliation? For the past three and a half decades the American Government has operated a total trade embargo against the island. The Helms-Burton Bill currently under discussion in Congress intends to extend trade restrictions to other countries, while travel between

America and Cuba is already severely limited. What else is left for America to do, short of invading the island?

I hope that Mr Clinton will not now pander further to Cuban exile groups in Miami: their electoral power in Florida has for too long dictated national policy towards Cuba when, as most sensible opinion in the US recognises, continuing economic aggression is unjust, anachronistic and spiteful, and is anyway counter-productive to its intentions.

Yours sincerely,
NICK ANGEL,
1 Parkgate Avenue,
Whittington, Manchester.

Value added

From Ms Gunilla Mattsson-Willis

Sir, I am bemused by the advertisement which appeared today from the Royal Mint distributor, inviting one to buy for £5 (p&p included) Britain's new legal-tender £5 coin.

There is a "30 Day Money Back Guarantee". What money?

Yours faithfully,
GUNILLA WILLIS,
17 Carver Road, SE24.
February 26.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Proper priorities in house design

From Mr Lucas Mellinger

Sir, In two recent articles on housing design (February 19 and 28) your Property Correspondent discusses the divergent views of Sir Terence Conran and Roger Humber, President of the House-Builders Federation, focussing on no more than the cosmetic aspects of the subject.

At a time when the Department of the Environment and the Royal Institute of British Architects are actively promoting awareness of quality in housing design, attention limited to such superficial criteria does, I believe, a disservice to the public.

You would not discuss cars by references only to their appearance. You would want to know about their performance and the suitability for your own purpose. That is what design is all about.

Likewise with urban houses: the public, including developers, need to be made aware that urban houses can be designed economically to serve not only, as in the past, as dormitories for employees who can maintain their mortgage, but also to serve the self-employed working from home, or the part-employed with leisure time for their own chosen activities, without direction to the authorised leisure centre.

Such urban houses generate independence and, locally, social intercourse. Contrary to universal assumption they can be economically designed low-rise, detached, with adjacent garages and parking for visitors, gardens, and with the utmost privacy.

I think that is what the public would like to know before they choose the style of their front door.

Yours faithfully,
LUCAS MELLINGER,
6 Mortlake Terrace,
Kew Green, Richmond, Surrey.
February 28.

Modern improvement?

From Ms Ann Brooks

Sir, You describe (Homes, February 28) an award-winning architectural scheme where single flats designed for active elderly and people who use wheelchairs are apparently stacked together in order to release land for family houses.

Is this a tower block? What happens when the lift breaks down?

Yours sincerely,
ANN BROOKS,
4 William Harvey House,
Whitlock Drive, SW19.
February 28.

Irish votes

From Mr Terence O'Brien

Sir, On the front page today (earlier editions) you write of the British Government being dependent upon the support of the Ulster Unionists for survival, and on the leader page you write of the American Government being motivated by Irish-American electoral support. The latter, you say, is cause for concern.

Yours truly,
TERENCE O'BRIEN,
Innisfree, Seal Square,
Selsey, Chichester, Sussex.
February 24.

Irish talks

From Mr Gerard Mulholland

Sir, If the British Government is to take part in the talks on the future of Northern Ireland (reports, February 29), can we also please have an election to choose our negotiators?

Yours etc,
GERARD MULHOLLAND,
28 Rue Pierre Curie,
94550 Chevilly-Larue, France.
February 29.

Hear no evil

From Mrs Jane Moss

Sir, I had already received the injection prior to an operation when I heard the surgeon say: "Oh dear, I've left my reading glasses at home." It is over 25 years ago but your feature about hearing under anaesthetic ("Deal to pain but not to insults", February 27) reminded me vividly of my frustration when I found myself unable to utter the words which floated round my brain: "Never mind, I don't mind waiting until tomorrow..."

Yours faithfully,
JANE MOSS,
11 Avenue Road,
Solihull, West Midlands.
February 27.

Excuses, excuses

From Mr J. P. Toomey

Sir, The article by James Ardglass on homework excuses (Education, February 23) reminded me of one that I encountered as a young classics master. The boy whom I challenged about his Latin sentences turned to the next blank page in his exercise book, and with a convincingly puzzled air said: "It was there, Sir, on that page."

Yours faithfully,
J. P. TOOMEY,
3 St Bartholomew's Road,
Ardley Kings,
Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire.
February 23.

Veto debt Bill, IoD tells MPs

THE Institute of Directors (IoD) wants MPs to vote against a private members' Bill designed to give small firms a statutory right to interest on overdue debts.

What most businesses would prefer, says the IoD, are measures to make it quicker, cheaper and easier to recover debts in the county courts, and to increase the power of bailiffs to collect debts. The IoD's advice was drawn up after soundings among members revealed only limited support for an automatic right to interest.

Parliament will debate the issue today as it examines a Bill introduced by Jon Owen Jones, Labour MP for Cardiff Central.

SKB cutbacks

SmithKline Beecham, the pharmaceuticals and healthcare group, announced yesterday that it is to restructure its supply operations in Europe at the cost of about 400 jobs. Five plants on the Continent will close while production at two others, including one at Crawley in West Sussex, will be reduced.

Sherwood up

Pre-tax profits at Sherwood Computer Services, which supplies specialist software to insurance brokers, recovered to £6.9 million (£79,000) in the year in December 31, helped by an exceptional £4.8 million profit on the sale of City Deal.

Chase deal

Threadneedle Asset Management, the investment house, has appointed Chase Manhattan Bank as the global custodian of £17 billion of equities under its management. Threadneedle estimates the move will reduce clients' overall custody costs by at least 20 per cent annually.

It reported profits from continuing operations of £1.2 million (£131,000 loss). Excluding exceptional earnings were 19.9p a share (12p). A final dividend of 2.5p a share, payable April 26, makes a total of 3.75p (2p).



The sale of the Park Lane Hotel for £44.5 million has been likened by some investors to giving away the family silver

Park Lane Hotel sale under fire

DISGRUNTLED shareholders in London's prestigious Park Lane Hotel have vowed to fight its sale to ITT Sheraton for £44.5 million (Alasdair Murray writes).

A group of investors led by John Hanson, a Yorkshire businessman, said yesterday that the price was inadequate and complained that they had been kept in the dark by Park Lane's management.

Mr Hanson said: "The company has given away the family silver for a pittance. The offer is even £6 million less than that offered by the Chelsfield property group at the end of last year."

Mr Hanson questioned whether the US hotels group had formally secured 72 per cent of acceptances for its £11-a-share offer. Park Lane insisted that the offer was good value and that the Chelsfield deal had collapsed before it made a firm offer.

Six years ago, All Nippon Airways offered to buy the hotel for more than twice the amount that Sheraton paid yesterday.

Trade officials look into Swab Gas marketing

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

CONTROVERSY over intensive doorstep marketing of gas in southwest England, where competitive supplies will begin at the end of April, was refuelled yesterday by Devon County Council.

Responding to complaints about Swab Gas passed on by the Gas Consumers Council, the county council's trading standards office said: "We shall be talking to Swab Gas at the highest level later this week, when we will hope to raise our concerns over their agents' alleged selling practices."

Swab Gas, an offshoot of South West Electricity which was bought last year by Southern Electric, the US utility, has since stopped the doorstep marketing operations that led to complaints.

Ian Powe, director of the Gas Consumers Council, said: "At best, Swab Gas confused people; at worst it misled them." He added: "Our advice to the South West's 500,000 gas consumers is unchanged. Sit

tight until all offers are on the table. If in doubt, don't sign; there's no rush while savings promised so far are not much more than a fiver a month."

The Gas Consumers Council said that complaints received showed "serious concern" among the approximately 8,000 households visited by Swab Gas officials. Dissecting responses from 65 customers, it said that 48 said that they signed a contract without realising it, 47 that the agent used misleading lan-

guage and 53 that no copy of the signed contract was left. Ofgas, the industry watchdog, yesterday published a booklet to guide customers in the South West through gas supply choice. A number of independent gas companies have established operations in the region, hoping to gain market share at the expense of British Gas. British Gas has yet to outline its plans for defending its market.

North Norfolk District Council has approved plans that allow construction of a £500 million gas interconnector between the UK and the Continent. The council approved a gas compression facility at British Gas's Becton site, which will enable the interconnector's surface works to be built without further impact on the landscape. The interconnector, to link the UK with the Continent's gas grid, should start exports in 1998.

Separate figures from the Central Statistical Office yesterday showed that Britain's trade gap with the rest of the world barely changed from November to December and widened slightly in 1995 as a whole. Statisticians said the underlying trend was improving. A surplus with the European Union was recorded for the first time since August 1993.

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Rea Brothers fined £29,500 on overdrafts

A CITY watchdog has fined the investment arm of Rea Brothers, the merchant bank, £29,500, including costs, for allowing its clients' money bank account to become overdrawn on 171 occasions (Robert Miller writes).

The level of overdraft in each case fluctuated between £10,000 and over £50,000 for periods

of one day to more than a month. Imro, the regulator for fund managers, said that Rea Brothers Investment Management (RBIM) had been found guilty of allowing the overdrafts between May 1994 and September 1995 and failing to take corrective action between March 1992 and May 1995 even though it was aware of the overdrafts.

Consumer credit falls back

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

CONSUMER credit weakened significantly in January as shoppers who built up big credit card debts during a bumper Christmas season tightened their belts again.

Borrowing fell to £549 million in January from £827 million in December. Although there was a big increase in new credit extended, there was an even sharper increase in repayments which led to the net decline in January. The figures were in contrast to fresh evidence that borrowing to buy houses is becoming healthier.

Separate figures from the Central Statistical Office yesterday showed that Britain's trade gap with the rest of the world barely changed from November to December and widened slightly in 1995 as a whole. Statisticians said the underlying trend was improving. A surplus with the European Union was recorded for the first time since August 1993.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Regulator warned on consumer protection

WARNINGS that electricity customers could lose some consumer protection after the introduction of competition in domestic supply in 1998 were yesterday sounded by the National Consumer Council which said it was concerned that not enough cost-benefit analysis had been done.

The council told Stephen Lintell, the electricity regulator, that "strong and permanent" controls must be exerted on electricity suppliers. It said that it was concerned that the regulator envisaged that consumer protection would be needed for only a transitional period.

Frauds net £6m per day

FRAUDSTERS using false financial instruments are stealing more than £6 million a day from businesses, individuals and sometimes even governments according to a report by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). The schemes, use a variety of bogus names such as Prime Bank Instruments, Bank Debentures and Gold Certificates. The ICC yesterday launched a worldwide campaign, supported by the Bank of England and British Bankers' Association, to alert people to the dangers of the schemes.

Thistle Hotels advances

SOARING room rates in London have buoyed prospects at Thistle Hotels, the hotel chain controlled by Brierley Investments of New Zealand. The group, which changed its name from Mount Charlotte Investments, lifted pre-tax profits 50 per cent to £34.8 million in the year to end-December. Average rates rose nearly 12 per cent over the year. Room occupancy was up 1.4 per cent. Earnings per share rose 34 per cent to 3.78p. Robert Peel, chief executive, said that bookings were unaffected by recent terrorist attacks.

Quarto acquisition

THE Quarto Group, the UK book publisher, is buying America's Walter Foster Publishing, a publisher of art instruction manuals, for \$5 million. Walter Foster, which achieved sales of \$5.432 million in 1995, sells most of its books through art materials stores and craft outlets. The company is a Disney and Warner Brothers licensee. Yesterday, Quarto reported a rise in 1995 profits to £7 million before tax, from £6.94 million. Earnings were 23.2p a share (19.6p). A final dividend of 5.25p a share lifts the total to 7.25p from 6.3p.

Celsius Group to split

CELSIUS GROUP, the Swedish company that makes the Bofors range of anti-aircraft guns, is to split into two to facilitate merger talks in the fast-growing restructuring of the European defence industry. Up to 1,500 jobs will be shed in the group's defence arm, most of them at Bofors. Celsius Information Systems, the group's information technology arm, will be renamed Enator. It will have annual sales of £437 million. The core Celsius business will generate sales of about £1 billion, the company said.

Print venture unaffected

THE TELEGRAPH, owner of The Daily Telegraph, said that the proposed merger of MAI and United News & Media will not affect ownership or operations of West Ferry Printers, a 50/50 venture between The Telegraph and United's Express Newspapers, in spite of a proviso that a change in ownership of either party would let the survivor buy the other's West Ferry stake for a nominal sum, because Express would still technically be owned by United. United today holds a shareholders' meeting to approve terms of the merger.

UK inflation 'fourth'

BRITAIN'S inflation rate was the fourth highest out of 14 European countries in January, according to a harmonised inflation figure published for the first time yesterday by Eurostat, the European Commission's statistical office. The measure will eventually be used to judge which economies qualify for the single European currency, scheduled for 1999 and on this measure, Britain would not, at this stage, qualify. On the measure, British inflation stood at 3.2 per cent, above the retail prices index of 2.9 per cent. Spain, Italy and Greece were higher.

Hanson to raise \$780m

HANSON, the industrial conglomerate, said yesterday that it was aiming to raise \$780 million from a public offering of 64 per cent of Suburban Propane, its subsidiary. Hanson will place 18.5 million Suburban Propane shares on the New York Stock Exchange at \$20.50. A further \$425 million of senior notes will also be issued. The offer is scheduled to close on March 5. The flotation is the latest step in Hanson's £2 billion disposal plans announced before Christmas. Hanson shares crept up 2.5p to close at 188.5p.

Highlights from Standard Life's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 15 November 1995

The Group

► Group assets under management increased over the year by almost £6bn to £44bn with total new premiums amounting to just over £2bn.

► Standard Life is exceptionally strong financially - with a 'Triple A' rating from both Standard & Poor's and Moody's - and is more than able to finance all likely future developments whilst retaining its mutual status. It therefore has no plans to demutualise believing strongly that a well-run mutual company should provide better returns to its policyholders than a proprietary company which must be run primarily for the benefit of its shareholders.

► With profit policyholders continue to receive excellent returns.

► Group development continued with -

- a branch office opened in Frankfurt and distribution agreement signed with Germany's largest life broker,
- a joint venture agreement signed with one of India's premier financial institutions in anticipation of the opening of the marketplace in that country,
- a Representative Office in China opening in Shanghai later this year.

United Kingdom

► Whilst business flowing from the tie with the Halifax ceased, business from other sources increased in a difficult market.

► Continued interest from overseas companies in acquiring UK insurers is likely to keep in business a number of companies which might otherwise have left the market.

► Standard Life is pleased that a consensus is emerging that the regulation of the financial services industry requires urgent change.

► Guidelines on corporate governance were issued to the Chairmen of the FTSE 100 companies.

Canada

► The flow of funds into stocks and bonds, fuelled by the slowdown in the North American economy, contributed to excellent returns from the financial markets.

► A new range of group savings and retirement products was well received and considerable success was achieved in the individual savings and retirement markets.

► Overall new business was at record levels.

Republic of Ireland

► Whilst demand in general has shifted from traditional product lines, sales of pension products has remained strong.

► Investment in the infrastructure supporting its Irish operations has ensured that the Company can meet the needs of its customers now and in the future.

Spain

► Premium income increased substantially and further branches were opened across the country.

► During 1996, Prosperity intends to acquire additional product licences and develop the means to extend its range of insurance and financial products.

The Annual Report and Accounts, including the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 23 April, will be available from Friday, 29 March. Policyholders may obtain a copy by writing to the Customer Information Team at PO Box 141, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh EH3 5RG or by telephoning (0131) 245 2668. Proxy forms may be similarly obtained by members entitled to vote.

STANDARD LIFE

The Standard Life Assurance Company is a mutual company registered in Scotland (no 524) Head Office: 3 George Street, Edinburgh. Tel (0131) 225 2552. The Standard Life marketing group includes Standard Life Personal Funds Limited, Standard Life Trust Management Limited, Standard Life Fund Management Limited.

*Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority; †Regulated by IMRO

TransAtlantic plans low-cost life firm

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

TRANSATLANTIC Holdings, the financial services group, has given warning that the next 12 months would be tough for UK insurers and announced plans to set up a low-cost life and pensions company by the end of the year.

Donald Gordon, the chairman, said that the new company would be created through the acquisition of a mutual insurer in the UK or United States and would offer simple investment products to customers of large shopping centres in which TransAtlantic had an interest.

He has a budget of £500 million, which could be doubled, and has been in talks with a number of organisations.

TransAtlantic has a 74.6 per cent interest in Capital Shopping Centres, which owns and manages Lakeside shopping centre, Thurrock, the Metro Centre, Gateshead, and six other centres, and a 100 per cent in Capital & Counties.

TransAtlantic yesterday reported an increase in pre-tax profits to £93.8 million, from £80 million, for the 12 months to December 31, excluding an exceptional gain of £109.9

million from the disposal of 50 per cent in Sun Life.

Earnings per share before exceptional items were 17.5p (14.63p). The total dividend per ordinary share is 14.5p (13.2p). TransAtlantic intends to change its name to Liberty International Holdings.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	2005
	Buys	Sells
Australia \$	2.10	1.94
Austria Sch	16.84	15.34
Belgium Fr	46.25	44.98
Canada \$	2.21	2.05
Cyprus Cyp£	0.750	0.685
Denmark Kr	3.31	6.51
Finland Mk	7.52	6.87
France Fr	2.47	7.48
Germany Dm	2.41	2.20
Greece Dr	368.00	364.00
Hong Kong \$	12.49	11.49
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel Sh	5,150	4,500
Italy Lit	2,044.00	2,229.00
Japan Yen	174.60	158.60
Malta	0.591	0.536
Netherlands Gld	2.574	2.444
New Zealand \$	2.42	2.20
Norway Kr	10.40	9.80
Portugal Esc	244.50	228.00
S Africa Rd	6.41	5.81
Spain Ptas	162.50	162.50
Sweden Kr	10.95	10.15
Switzerland Fr	1.97	1.79
Turkey Lira	99818.0	94318.0
USA \$	1.625	1.489

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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"Rolling Spot Forex" Business A message for investors

As of today (March 1st 1996), firms offering "rolling spot forex" dealing services should have applied for authorisation under the Financial Services Act.

- If you are a customer of one of these firms you can check if it has applied for authorisation by calling SFA's Information Line on 01426 944403.
- If the firm you are dealing with is not included in that Information Line you should contact the Securities and Investments Board on 0171 638 1240 immediately.
- The Information Line will be updated once applications have been processed.
- Until authorisation is granted you will not enjoy the protections offered by the Financial Services Act, such as the investors compensation scheme.

Notice issued by the Securities and Futures Authority, Cottons Centre, Cottons Lane, London SE1 2QB.

SFA is responsible for regulating members of all the organised City investment markets, i.e. the stock market, eurobond, financial futures, commodity futures markets and also corporate finance specialists and off market traders. Around 1,350 firms are regulated by SFA.

□ How fast can consortium make tracks? □ Towards a pan-European plane industry □ Pressures that sparked an oil link

Closely observed trains

AT A TIME when Thames Valley's finest are engaged in clearing away those who do not wish to see a road built, it is hard to imagine a public riot in favour of building a railway. It is worth examining, therefore, just why the now-successful London & Continental consortium should ever wish to complete a fast link to the Channel Tunnel.

The consortium, including a man in a woolly jumper whose name temporarily escapes the memory, is contracted to build 108km of fast track, new termini at St Pancras and Stratford, a link with Waterloo and sundry other bits. In return they have been granted one of the best packages of developable property to fall available since the Louisiana Purchase.

They are going at it slowly. The first phase, which will swallow an unspecified but fairly small lump of the consortium's cash, is to draw up the design work, put in train the acquisition of the necessary land and get the contractors on board.

This should take until the end of next year, by which time, it is assumed, the Eurostar passenger service will be profitable. Cast aside comparisons with the Tunnel itself or Eurodisney, similar ambitious projects that failed to attract anything like the necessary customers or revenue. Only a blithering idiot, or British

Rail, could fail to run Eurostar at a profit. For Richard Branson, now that was the name, it should be a doddle.

By this stage the consortium, which has a properly operating train set and the promise of government money to buttress its case, seeks cash to build the track from the financial markets. The European Investment Bank for soft loans and probably the private investor, London & Continental Railways makes its debut on the stock market, and several transporters are trampled in the rush for shares.

The temptation then must be then to hurry even more slowly to build the project — especially the expensive bits, and the first third out from St Pancras accounts for two thirds of the cost. The actual Kent track, including the Waterloo link, is only a fifth of the total £3 billion, half of which comes from the state.

The train set operates fine: do you really want to demolish all those houses? Meanwhile the property assets, especially St Pancras, are quietly and profitably redeveloped, the public purse taking a slice through the

now obligatory claw-back of some, note some, of the profit.

The Channel Tunnel rail link is the first indication so far that a private finance initiative can actually bring in the goods. It was hardly surprising that the scales had to be weighted to tempt the consortium in, especially after the previous scheme foundered.

All this is not to suggest that the consortium has no incentive or intention to build the track — indeed, it risks losing the lot if it does not. But priorities have been known to change. After Newbury, what chance for another huge road scheme?

BAe comes in from the cold

BRITISH AEROSPACE is an unlikely glamour stock for the post-Cold War 90s. Military spending has fallen and value for money has become the watchword in procurement programmes. But disposal of non-core assets and cost-cutting have wrought a remarkable recovery. At 870p the shares have more



than doubled from last year's low of 424p.

The market has now caught up with BAe's new incarnation as the leading non-American defence company. But as chief executive Dick Evans has indicated, the action is far from over. Having got its own military wing in order, BAe is now talking to its rivals and collaborators about Europe-wide consolidation on every front.

The Ministry of Defence set its face against a merger between BAe and its arch-enemy, GEC, and rightly so. Instead, by concentrating on cross-border deals within Europe, BAe can blast away national barriers and open a common European market in warplanes, missiles,

ammunition and the like. By building one next-generation fighter plane to replace the three now in or nearing production, Europe's arms makers can provide the Air Marshalls with the plane they want at a price they, and overseas customers too, can afford.

Rationalisation of both industry and market should also give the Europeans the power to cut deals with American rivals on equal terms. What is true in warplanes is equally forceful in the civil field, where BAe and Daimler-Benz are now learning hard on their French and Spanish partners to consolidate their activities within Airbus.

If this can be achieved, Airbus will be able to complement its technical advantage over Boeing with the last link in its product range, the A3XX super-jumbo. For even with low-interest launch aid from governments, and Asian partners, Airbus will never find the necessary \$10 billion without the kind of management structure and transparent balance sheet that a banker can bet his career on. Without A3XX, Airbus is con-

demned to slow death through a thousand lost sales campaigns. Consolidate or die, is BAe's battle cry. Investors, take note.

All hands to the pumps

"IT'S a bit like two dinosaurs mating — you might get an eagle, you might get a dodo. Most likely you'll just get a larger dinosaur." Thus, one oil industry insider's irreverent response to the not-quite-a-merger, not-quite-an-asset-swap by BP and Mobil.

Admittedly, he was considering the refinery and lubricants side, rather than the retail side. Here, the terms put BP in the driving seat. The British partner is in charge of the 9,000 filling stations, a fact reflected by their being branded with the BP name. The deal is, therefore, a response to the warfare at the petrol pumps initially sparked by the aggressive entry of the big supermarkets.

Mobil is taking charge of lubricants, which seems fair, given that BP has never really

sparkled in this area — remember Duckhams? Few do, although at one time it was the leading brand, its decline coming about under BP ownership.

Both sides have already slumped down their refineries, so the deal would seem to have few implications there. It is in retail that the main cost savings are achievable, to pull back market share and limit the damage from the price war, especially if it spreads further.

The City, of course, loved the deal — the teenage scribbler has yet to be born who would fail to respond with glee to 3,000 savings, provided they take place well away from the Square Mile. Any benefits other than mere cost savings may be harder to achieve. But it should spark some action from the other oil dinosaurs.

Lottery wins vote

THE "revelation" that the National Lottery will make profits of £65 million this year has sparked a predictable parliamentary row, although the information is available from any decent leisure analyst. A truly depressing figure that was slipped by the National Heritage Select Committee is that on double rollover weeks more people play the lottery than vote in a general election.

Lasmo strikes black after years of loss

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LASMO, the oil exploration company, yesterday reported it earned net income of £34 million in 1995, well ahead of expectations and its first profit since 1990. It incurred a £3 million net loss in 1994.

The company also announced a fifth promising discovery in Algeria, which should help to boost output. Production averaged the equivalent of 164 million barrels of oil per day last year. This is set to rise to 185 million this year, and should peak at 210 million in 1997.

Lasmo shares eased 4p to 184p, pushed down by profit-taking after a strong run fuelled by takeover rumours.

Joe Darby, Lasmo chief executive, said the company had performed well both financially and operationally. Underlying operational profit was £142 million, compared with £109 million. Efforts at reducing costs pushed them to £3.17 per barrel last year and they are expected to fall to £3 per barrel next year.

The company's hopes for the

future focus on fields in the UK, Pakistan, Italy, Colombia and, particularly, Algeria. The Algerian fields have potential reserves of 1.5 billion barrels, of which Lasmo has now booked 82 million barrels. The first oil from them is expected at the end of next year.

Test results for a well in the Hassi Berkine South field showed a flow of 17,682 barrels per day. This confirmed it was a "large, high quality reservoir", Mr Darby said, and added to Lasmo's confidence about its Algerian operations.

Other areas Lasmo is interested in include Libya, Venezuela and the Middle East.

Mr Darby said the company, which is paying a dividend of 1.25p this year, "would very much hope to increase it, but before that we want higher, sustainable profitability".

Mr Darby said that in spite of constant rumours of bids, the company, which fought off a bid by Enterprise in 1994, had received no approaches.

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Corroon up in spite of provisions

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

WILLIS CORROON'S UK insurance underwriting operation, which was shut down five years ago, will cost £20 million more in continuing administration expenses than was originally thought.

The sum has been deducted from 1995 profits. Though its marine, aviation and pollution underwriting operation was closed in 1991, Willis Corroon now estimates it will need staff to handle claims until 2025 — 20 years longer than had originally been estimated.

The pre-tax profit for the year to December 31, after exceptional items, was £50 million (£6 million).

During 1995 the board declared four quarterly net dividends of 1.65p each, totalling 6.6p for the year, unchanged from 1994. A first interim dividend for 1996 of 1.65p net has also been declared.

Shares rise for new LSI chief

By ERIC REGULY

SHARES of Life Sciences International (LSI), the laboratory equipment maker, rose 16 per cent to 111p yesterday after the company appointed a chief executive.

He is Riccardo Pigliucci, 49, the former chief executive of America's Perkin-Elmer Corporation, the world's largest maker of scientific research equipment and instrumentation. Sir Christopher Bland, chairman, and two chief operating officers had shared the chief executive's role.

LSI reported pre-tax profits of £24 million in the year to December 31, down 16 per cent from the previous period, on turnover up 7 per cent at £189.3 million. Earnings per share fell from 10.6p to 7.8p. The final of 2.8p, payable on May 10, makes the total dividend 4.4p, unchanged from last year.

Storehouse pays £62m for Childrens World

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

STOREHOUSE, which owns British Home Stores and Mothercare, yesterday extended its children's clothes empire with the £62.5 million purchase of Childrens World from Boots.

The chain is considered to have underperformed since it was set up in 1987. Last year, Childrens World made an operating profit of £500,000 on sales of £105 million, and Boots said that the chain is expected to make a small loss in the first half of this year.

Childrens World will be integrated within Mothercare, giving rise to cost savings that will enhance profitability. Childrens World has 56 stores.

mainly in out-of-town shopping centres. The stores offer clothes, toys and baby products for children from 0-12 years and provide in-store facilities such as play areas.

Keith Edelman, chief executive of Storehouse, said: "The purchase of Childrens World enables us to speed up the pace of development and gives us out-of-town opportunities which are complementary to Mothercare's high street stores." Mothercare has 269 UK stores. Its operating profit last year was £17 million on sales of £306 million.

Tempus, page 24

1

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Yorkshire buying surge as Bear Stearns prowls

YORKSHIRE ELECTRICITY has gone on bid after the name of Bear Stearns, the US securities house, showed up on its share register. City speculators were last night convinced that the recent purchase of a parcel of 750,000 shares, or 1.2 per cent of the issued share capital, by Bear Stearns could be the prelude to a full bid by one of the big American power utilities.

Top of the list of likely predators is General Public Utilities of New Jersey. Shares of Yorkshire, one of three RECs not to have received a bid approach so far, climbed 12p to 754p last night, valuing the company at £1.16 billion.

Earlier this week, American utility bosses got together for the International Utility Conference in Florida. They heard the international president of Southern Electric tell them what good value British utility companies were turning out to be. He should know. Last year his company paid 965p a share, or £1.1 billion, for South Western Electricity.

By the close of business last night one million Yorkshire Electricity shares had changed hands, with Merrill Lynch, another US securities house, said to be a big buyer.

The rest of the equity market endured another lacklustre performance on the back of further losses for international bond markets. Bunds led the way lower, disappointed by the Bundesbank's pegging of interest rates. This prompted sharp falls in gilts and futures related selling.

But with the help of the Dow Jones average, which managed to halve an early 44-point fall, the FT-SE 100 index reduced a near 30-point fall to 10.6 at 3,727.2.

Market speculation that a big deal was about to be unveiled in the oil sector proved correct. The only drawback was that the speculators had the wrong company.

The bid for Lasso failed to materialise, but the market was treated to a \$5 billion merger of the refining and marketing operations of BP, headed by John Browne, chief executive, and Mobil, whose chairman and chief executive is Lou Noto.

The prospect of increased competition in the European market bodes badly for Barmah, which was left nursing a fall of 39p at £10.51. BP rose 10p to 539p.

Instead of discussing bid



A £5bn merger for BP's John Browne and Mobil's Lou Noto

terms the speculators had to chew over Lasso's full-year figures which, in the event, were at the top end of expectations with the group moving back into the black. Net profits grew to £34 million, compared with a deficit last time of £3 million. The shares finished 4p lower at 184p.

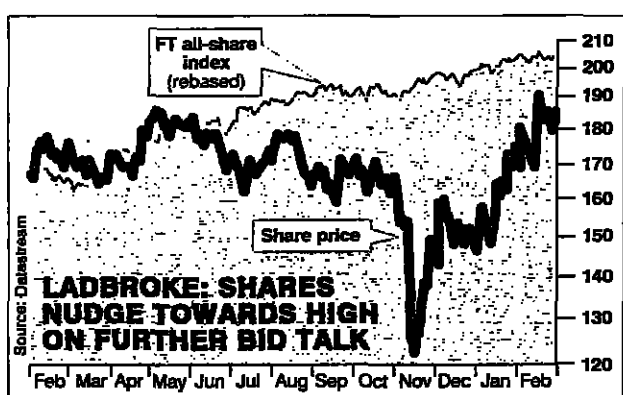
There was no sign to an end of speculative buying in

Nottingham Group surged 19p to a high of 127p. It has been appointed the official supplier of sports equipment to the Youth Sport Trust and the Sports Council for the "TOP" programme. Financed by the National Lottery, TOP aims to supply 22,000 schools and clubs with equipment by 2000.

Ladbroke, the betting and hotel group, which continued to nudge towards its high for the year with a rise of 25p to 186p on turnover of almost five million shares.

Brokers are still talking about a bid soon from Bass, the Holiday Inn group, or Hilton Hotels in the US. At these levels, Ladbroke is valued at £2.2 billion.

Storehouse, the Bhs and



LADBROKE: SHARES NUDGE TOWARDS HIGH ON FURTHER BID TALK

enabled British Aerospace to go up better at 870p, to end the year on a high note and lift pre-tax profits from £208 million to £234 million. The figure was struck after one-off profits totalling £94 million. The defence order book is currently worth £9.7 billion. Dick Evans, chief executive, was quick to stamp on talk of a possible merger of the group's defence operations with those of GEC, off at 365p.

The market also gave a warm reception to full-year figures from Cowie Group, the motor distributor. Full-year figures were at the top end of the range, with pre-tax profits climbing 32 per cent to £56.9 million. The group is buying County Bus from National Express for £8.6 million. The shares rose 11p to 323p.

Hanson firm 24p to 188p after revealing details of the proposed offer of shares in Suburban Propane, which should rake in proceeds of \$780 million. It has just sold its Cavenham timberland and sawmills business for \$500 million.

News of increased losses at Cantab Pharmaceuticals failed to make much impact on the share price, which marked time at 500p. The pre-tax loss grew to £6.1 million, but the group remains confident about the future. It is pinning its hopes on its links with Pfizer, the US pharmaceutical group.

GILT-EDGED: There was a further steepening of the yield curve as prices at the longer end of the market suffered sharp falls after some worse than expected US unemployment numbers. Trading conditions generally remained difficult, with the market still struggling to absorb this week's £3 billion auction of Treasury 8 per cent 2021.

In the futures pit, the March series of the Long Gilt ended the session £4 down at £106.75 as a total of 92,000 contracts were completed.

The worst losses in the cash market were seen in longs, where Treasury 8 per cent 2015 fell £1.32 to 97.74, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was nine ticks lower at £102.92.

NEW YORK: Share trading on Wall Street followed bonds and continued to be volatile. By midday, after a 60-point swing, the Dow Jones Industrial average was down 19.87 points at 5,486.34.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	5486.34 (-19.87)
S&P Composite	641.31 (-3.54)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	20125.37 (-205.45)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	11048.09 (-215.98)
Amsterdam:	
Euro Stoxx	513.22 (-0.42)
Sydney:	
ASX	2280.00 (-24.3)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	2473.55 (-1.05)
Singapore:	
SEAC	2438.51 (-0.08)
Brussels:	
General	8824.94 (-28.03)
Paris:	
CAC-40	1990.77 (-1.12)
Zurich:	
SIX	740.10 (-1.30)
London:	
FT-100	3727.2 (-10.6)
FT-250	4215.0 (-0.5)
FT-1000	1864.1 (-1.2)
FT-10000	1575.00 (-0.25)
FT-100000	1840.77 (-1.67)
FT Non Financials	1944.59 (-2.29)
FT Financials	1118.2 (-0.09)
FT Govt Secs	93.05 (-0.28)
Bulgaria	316.68
SEAC Volume	768.2m
USM (Daxim)	205.73 (+1.45)
USM	1.5312 (+0.0036)
German Mark	2.2001 (+0.0078)
Exchange Index	83.5 (+0.2)
Bank of England official base rate	1.18%
RPI	150.2 Jan (2.0%) Jan 1997=100
RPIX	149.3 Jan (2.8%) Jan 1997=100

RECENT ISSUES

BZW Eq (Bmd) A	509	+	4
Ballynary	5	+	5
Clubhouse (75)	3	+	3
Clubhouse Wrs	3	+	3
Dmtek	67	+	3
Ex-Lands Props	12	+	1
Ex-Lands Wrs	8	+	1
Freepages (12)	15	+	1
Mediatek (60)	62	+	1
Net Prime Wrs	8	+	1
Optical Care (8)	70	+	1
Ormonde Mining	12	+	1
Revelation Pte	105	+	1
Self Sealing Sys (54)	50	+	1
Shire Pharms (175)	305	+	4
Skypharma B Wrs	8	+	1
Streamline (180)	184	+	1

RIGHTS ISSUES

Ashford n/p (152)	11	+	1
Br Borneo n/p (310)	122	+	2
Farm Fin Ut n/p (540)	67	+	4
Headlam n/p (185)	32	+	2
IAF n/p (10)	1	+	1
Innovative T n/p (70)	33	+	7
Lockers n/p (115)	21	+	1
Persimmon n/p (155)	22	+	1

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Shedwood Comp	218p (+32p)
Life Sciences	111p (+15p)
Real Time	220p (+15p)
Aus New Z	210p (+14p)
Stanley Leisure	435p (+18p)
Serco Gp	446p (+18p)
Cowie	323p (+11p)
Granada	727p (+11p)
Telecom	813p (+13p)
Forth Ports	585p (+13p)
Broken Hill	945p (+15p)
Net Aus B	624p (+18p)
Mit	391p (+10p)
FALLS:	
Bicoms Int	549p (-11p)
Nat West	691p (-11p)
Whitbread	711p (-10p)
Allied Domecq	517p (-8p)
Reckitt Col	856p (-14p)
Celisis	107p (-8p)

Closing Prices Page 27

TEMPUS

Success worthy of suitors

ONE of the mysteries of the oil exploration sector is why Lasso's shares trade near or under market estimates of their net asset value while rival Enterprise trades at a premium. The simple answer is that Enterprise is paying out more, its shares are yielding over 5 per cent while Lasso shareholders are unlikely to be impressed with its dividend of 1.25p on a share price of 184p. Share price performance is another matter, with Lasso outperforming the FTSE-100, and more satisfying, rival Enterprise.

Lasso would like to be able to increase the dividend but the company wants to see higher profits. Lasso effectively won the argument about capital and income when it fought off the Enterprise bid two years ago and believes that its share performance will keep investors happy. That should continue in spite of fears

that Iraqi exports could soon spoil profit forecasts. Yesterday's £34 million net profit and the good news on Lasso's Algerian wells highlight its success in exploration.

Enterprise was also successful in replacing its reserves but there are question marks about profitability. The company is replacing cheap British barrels with higher taxed Norwegian oil and the prospect of dividend increases still looks remote.

In asset value terms, were Lasso valued on Enterprise's rating, its shares would be north of £2 but the market cannot make up its mind on how to value these companies, with UK shareholders demanding income while American investors prefer to see profits reinvested. What is clear is that Lasso has so successfully justified its independence that it could yet again attract a bid.

Storehouse

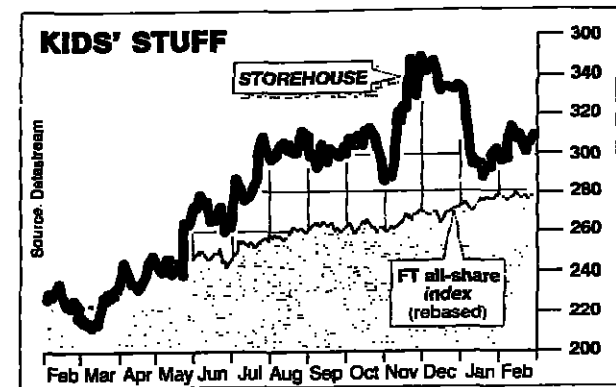
STOREHOUSE was once regarded as a second division retailer, its core British Home Stores and Mothercare chains achieving neither the growth nor the margins of blue ribbon companies such as Marks & Spencer. But in the past couple of years, Storehouse has cast off its dowdy reputation in the City and begun to demonstrate that even the unglamorous world of baby clothes can produce consistent profits.

The purchase of Childrens World from Boots makes strategic sense. The chain can be quickly rebranded under the better-known Mothercare name. While Childrens World has concentrated on out-of-town sites, Mothercare has a limited presence beyond the high street and the two will make a good geo-

graphical fit. There is scope to make savings through stronger purchasing power and operational cuts.

Storehouse has been re-shaping Mothercare with a more aggressive pricing policy leading to better profits. The company is keen to add an extra 100 Mothercare stores over the next few years. Childrens World pro-

vides 50 immediately and while the price was a little higher than anticipated it still looks good value in the medium term. Storehouse shares have dropped back from their high after weaker than expected Christmas sales. But the underlying strategy remains strong and the dip in price provides a window to buy.



Cowie Group

THE sharp rise enjoyed by Cowie shares yesterday, on a day when much of the market suffered a skid, was a pat on the back for the motor and bus group's diversification strategy that has shielded it from a depressed car market.

Acquisitions drove pre-tax profits 28 per cent higher to £58.8 million in 1995, as turnover topped £1 billion for the first time. There were also benefits from a shift by large corporations to outsource their company car fleets and a strong market for ex-contract hire cars. This helped Cowie's finance division to lift profits 19 per cent to £3.1 million. The motor division also grew but by a more modest 10 per cent, to £11.2 million, in a car market where margins have been short to ribbons. Retail demand is still depressed and oversupply by manufacturers continues to dent recovery hopes. A full contribution from Leaside allowed profits

from the bus and coach operation to surge to £10 million (£3.4 million).

Further bolt-on acquisitions are possible, with European car leasing or another bus company the most likely areas for expansion. NatWest Securities has raised its current year pre-tax profit forecast to £64.9 million, giving earnings of 29.8p a share. This would put the shares on a forward price/earnings multiple of 10.8 times, which although a 20 per cent discount to the market is fair in such terrible driving conditions.

Cantab

A YEAR ago, Cantab looked like just another biotechnology company whose luck had run out. The low point came when Baxter Healthcare pulled the plug on a joint programme to develop an organ transplant drug, causing Cantab shares to plummet. But it struggled on, focusing on therapeutic vaccines for

genital disorders. Then, in the autumn, Cantab got lucky again when Pfizer, the American drugs group, handed over a cheque for £2 million and launched a drive to develop veterinary applications from its new virus technology.

The shares doubled overnight and kept on going, reaching 500p. Should shareholders bail but on the assumption that Cantab will lose the next roll of the dice? The odds still seem to be in its favour.

The company expects to form another collaborative venture with a big-name partner sometime this year, and it promised that it would be cash generative. Furthermore, there are strong indications that one of its genital immunotherapy products will reach the market by 1999. The City is bullish on Cantab, valuing it somewhat higher than the current share price.

EDITED BY CARL MORTSHED

COMMODITIES

LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE				ICIS-ARD (London 0.00pm)				GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES				
COCO A				CRUDE OILS (¢/barrel FOB)				WHEAT (clove £)		BARLEY (clove £)		
Mar	95.00	Apr	108.00	Brent Physical	18.70	+0.15	Mar	116.75	Mar	107.90		
May	91.25	May	108.00	Brent 6 day (Apr)	17.80	+0.10	May	116.75	May	107.90		
Jun	91.25	Jun	108.00	Brent 10 day (Apr)	17.10	+0.10	Jun	116.75	Jun	107.90		
Jul	93.40	Jul	108.00	WTI Intermediate (Apr)	19.40	+0.35	Jul	120.50	Sep	108.50		
Aug	93.40	Aug	108.00	WTI Intermediate (May)	18.70	+0.15	Nov	121.50	Nov	108.50		
Dec	97.45	Dec	108.00				Nov	121.50	Dec	108.50		
Dec	99.94	Volume	15294				Volume	99.94	Volume	213		
ROBUSTA COFFEE (¢)				PRODUCTS (¢/MT)				POTATO (¢)				
Mar	175.12	Mar	1735.12	Spot CFM (Feb) Europe (delivered)	131.00	+0.10	Mar	175.12	Mar	1735.12		
May	160.165	May	1735.12	Gasoil EC	184.20	188.10	May	160.165	May	1735.12		
Jul	1796.179	Jul	1716.880	Gasoline EC	161.10	170.10	Jul	1796.179	Jul	1716.880		
Oct	1796.179	Oct	1716.880	3.5 Fuel Oil	104.00	109.20	Oct	1796.179	Oct	1716.880		
Volume	5670	Volume	5670	Naphtia	173.10	175.20	Volume	5670	Volume	56		
WHITE SUGAR (¢)				FPE FUTURES (¢NI Lb)				RUBBER (¢) / RSS (¢/lb)				
Reoters	Dec	311.815		Apr	172.9072.57	Jun	151.50	Mar	192.51	Mar	192.51	
Spot 40.5	Mar	308.00.5		May	160.7541.00	Jul	150.507.57	Apr	192.51	Apr	192.51	
Apr	317.475	May	308.00.5		154.7555.00	Vol	24025	May	192.51	May	192.51	
May	319.476	Jun	308.00.5					Jun	192.51	Jun	192.51	
Jun	321.620.5	Volume	1636					Jul	192.51	Jul	192.51	
MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION				BREAST (¢/pound)				BEEF (¢/lb)				
Average fatstock prices at representative markets on February 25				Apr	17.75	17.75	Jun	16.39	16.39	Mar	15.55	15.55
				May	17.07	17.07	Aug	16.70	16.70	Apr	15.55	15.55
				May	16.67	16.67	Vol	20992	Vol	16.39	16.39	
(¢/lb live)				Official: Volume grown				LONDON METAL EXCHANGE				
£/lb	102.27	13.02	13.02	Copper: GDE price given	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	
£/lb	102.27	13.02	13.02	Copper: GDE price given	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	31.00	
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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Quick change for Branson

ONE of the fastest TV advertisements ever made came to a standstill when a suitable raincoat could not be found for its star Richard Branson. Even with the interruption, it took only 36 hours of filming to make the advertisement for Virgin Direct, which is being shown on TV tonight for the first time.

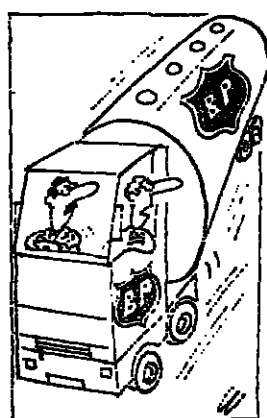
The producers had to ensure a quick shoot because of Branson's intended dash round the world in his £3 million hot-air balloon. Trapped in a tight navy mackintosh borrowed from his producer, Branson stopped filming and called for a change of wardrobe from the makeshift set on the Great West Road. Eventually, he plumped for a voluminous number in lurid green, secure in the knowledge that the advertisement is in black and white.

Evans steps in

IS DICK EVANS, the British Aerospace chief executive, getting ready for the top slot? Bob Bauman, the company's American chairman, took off for the airport and a transatlantic flight immediately after presenting the company's annual results to financial analysts yesterday morning. So it was Evans who had the pleasure of passing the 'hacks' toughest googlies to his colleagues, instead of dealing with them himself.

Over the shop

AS WE know from the antics of a recent Deputy Governor, many strange things happen at the Bank of England. Now it can be revealed that for 25 years, a Chief Cashier used to sleep there! The revelation comes from an exhibition — Soane and Death — running at the Dulwich Picture Gallery devoted to the art and architecture of the tombs and monuments designed by Sir John Soane. The Chief Cashier in question was one Abraham Newland who joined the Bank aged 18 as a clerk and rose to become Chief Cashier from 1778 to 1807. In the practice of the day he had residence there.



Winner takes Fry

HATS OFF to NatWest Markets, which in its day has faced SBC Warburg on the other side of a takeover deal. Now it has 'taken over' one of SBC's men. Nicholas Fry, a senior member of SBC's corporate finance department, moves on March 20 as head of UK corporate finance. NatWest defended Amec against unwanted advances by SBC Warburg client Kvaerner last December, leading David Barclays, MD of corporate finance, to quip "nice to see him joining the winning side". There are also farewells to SBC Warburg from Stella Coulthirst, a corporate finance director who joins BZW's corporate finance arm in April.

AND hats off, too, to Priory Investments which, in a £2 million deal with the Cadogan Group, has bought Christy & Company — the men's hatter founded in 1773 and supplier of traditional English bowler and top hats to, among others, James Lock & Co of St James's.

COLIN CAMPBELL

Carl Mortished takes a look at the BP/Mobil joint venture

Price war fuelled by forecourt link-up

Refining overcapacity remains a problem that will overshadow profit levels at the petrol pumps

Lou Noto, the native New Yorker who runs the Mobil oil company, looked curiously at his counterpart Sir David Simon when he described how BP's green shield would soon be plastered over his winged horse logo at 3,300 Mobil stations across Europe. The \$5 billion joint venture between Mobil and BP is not the first time that oil companies have collaborated in selling petrol to the consumer, but it marks a turning point.

The oil industry is now on a mission to restore decent margins to refining and marketing activities. It is the second half of a story which started at the wellhead and left tens of thousands of offshore oil workers without jobs. BP and Mobil have now emerged as two of the more ruthless cost-cutters in the industry and yesterday's partnership will ring alarm bells at companies such as Shell which have been slow to follow.

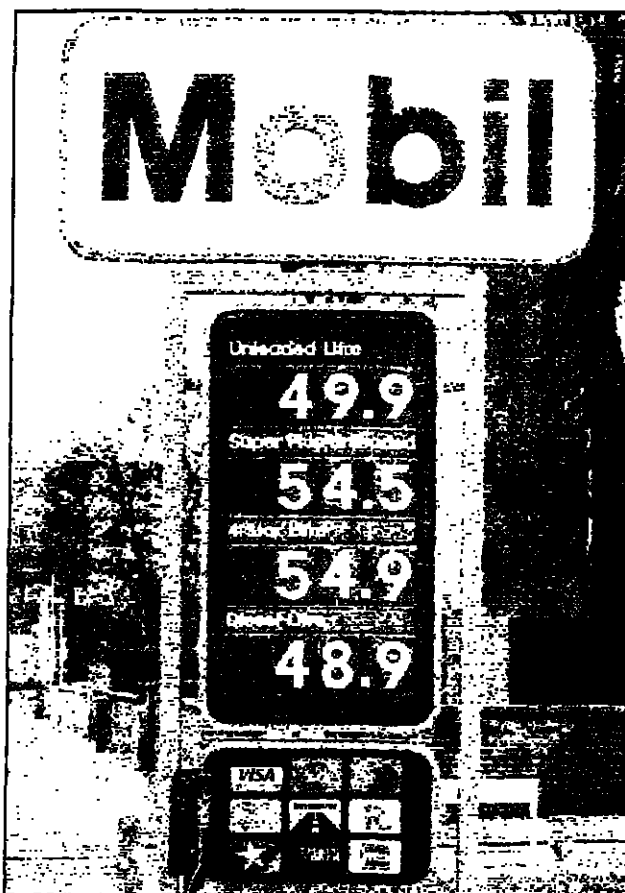
Europe is oversupplied with refineries producing commodity fuels for little or no profit. The overcapacity was allowed to continue for many years while leading oil companies were earning substantial profits selling petrol at the pump. However, first in France and more recently in the UK, marketing profits have been eroded as grocers added petrol to their portfolio of consumer products. In the UK, supermarkets have taken about a quarter of the

petrol retailing market, and Tesco has recently added stand-alone fuel outlets to its business. However, the price war has intensified with Esso's recent announcement that it would challenge the discounters' prices at every location.

Faced with little or no profit from making petrol and diesel, and slim margins from selling the stuff to motorists, the oil companies have two choices: exit the business or reduce costs. BP and Mobil have taken a lead in both directions. Last year, Mobil closed its Würth refinery in Germany, and in January, the British company announced the proposed sale of a French refinery and partial closure of an operation in Rotterdam. Combined with the sale last year of a US refinery, the restructuring will cost BP more than \$1 billion.

According to Wood Mackenzie, the consultants, the utilisation rate of Western European refineries is only 88 per cent and the recent closures are unlikely to make much difference to the excess of supply over demand. The joint venture has areas of overlap, particularly in Southern Germany where both companies have refineries, and rationalisation could lead to more closures or sales.

However, this deal is mainly about removing cost — in particular, the payroll cost of up to 3,000 jobs. The partners reckon on savings of \$400-500



The Mobil name will vanish from filling stations in favour of BP, although the former is expected to dominate in lubricants

million a year, much of which will come from reducing management costs and consolidation into one European head office. The partners are also counting on savings in bulk purchasing over the combined 8,900 petrol stations. "Both companies have led the way in reducing cost. This gives them an opportunity to leapfrog ahead," said Wood Mackenzie.

Marketing joint ventures

are not unknown: Texaco and Chevron operate in Asia under the Caltex banner and in Scandinavia, Texaco and Norsk Hydro work together. But the partnership between BP and Mobil is more significant, in part because of its scale: the two companies will lead to the number one position in lubricants and compete closely with Shell and Esso in fuels.

Even more significant is the



decision by Mobil virtually to give up its petrol brand in favour of BP's green logo, the sort of hard-headed commercial decision that has been lacking among oil companies as they struggled with supermarket competition.

Analysts speculated that, without the deal, Mobil might have quit European petrol retailing altogether. In Europe, Mobil's position is not unlike Burnah Castrol whose

main strength is a lubricants brand, Castrol GTX. Burnah last year sold its UK petrol stations to Frost group in a timely exit priced at £83 million and last month sold its Turkish fuels business.

But for Mobil, a tie-up with BP offers the chance to expand its lubricants brand further through the BP stations. Combining Mobil's lubricant tonnage of 480,000 with BP's 450,000 tonnes will give it an

18 per cent market share, easily outstripping Shell's 680,000 tonnes and Esso's 550,000 tonnes. The stated intention is to sell both BP and Mobil lubricants, but there can be little doubt that the Mobil brand will have pride of place. "One could speculate that the BP brand would eventually drift away," said Wood Mackenzie.

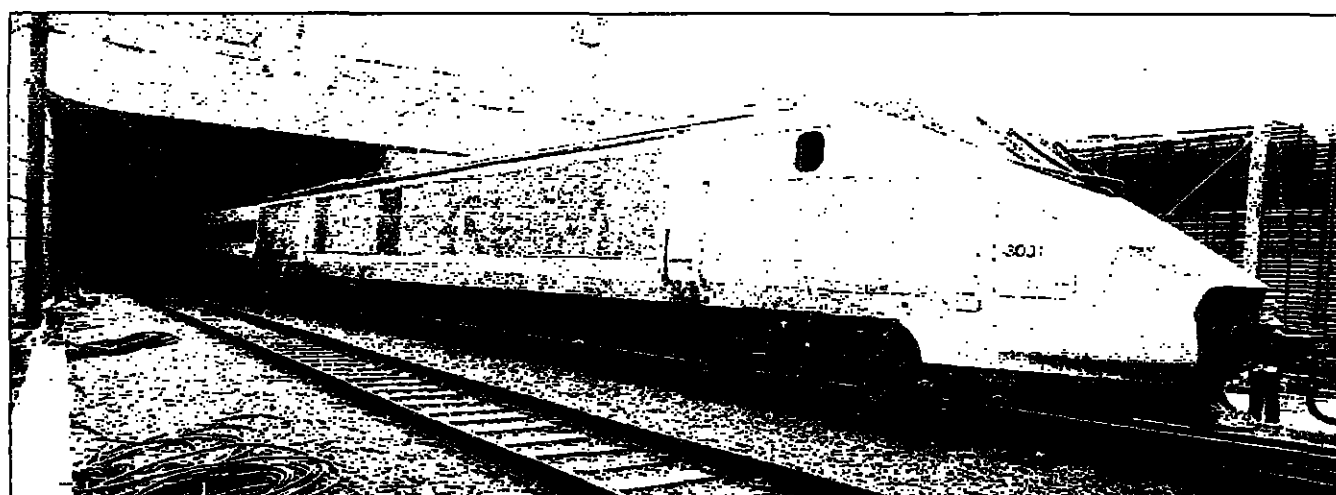
Expansion in Eastern Europe and further into the CIS will be a key focus of the joint venture, which covers 43 countries in Europe as well as Turkey and Russia. BP is developing a chain of 120 stations in Poland and already has extensive business in the former East Germany as well as seedcorn operations in Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Short-term success depends on achieving some \$300 million in cost-savings, and Mr Noto pointedly made it clear that *amour propre* would not stand in the way of profits. Cutting the head office payroll should be relatively easy, but \$200 million in new livery for petrol stations is a heavy extra cost. Mobil also brings with it the problem of Aral, the German retailing joint venture with Wintershall and Veba, raising the prospect of a complex ringfencing of its interest.

But BP and Mobil have done nothing about the key cause of the profits squeeze — overcapacity. State-owned oil companies keep old refineries running because it is cheaper than shutting them, and rivals prefer to tinker with rather than scrap their plant. Until that nettles is grasped, the oil companies will struggle to make a good living from petrol pumps.

Train operator takes over the driving seat

The task facing the winning consortium of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link contract to run Eurostar is enormous, says Jonathan Prynn



Can London & Continental Railways turn round the fortunes of Eurostar, which will require a £200 million subsidy this year?

In the end the Government had no choice. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link contract went to London & Continental Railways, not because its cash bid massively undercut its rivals, but because the entire Channel Tunnel project is now in desperate trouble.

Far from being the lucrative cash cow of the financial forecasts, Eurostar, the high-speed passenger service inherited by L&C&R, is losing money at an extraordinary rate and will require a £200 million taxpayer subsidy this year. Without a swift turnaround in its performance, Eurotunnel, which derives much of its revenue from Eurostar tolls, will be put under by its bankers and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link will not be built.

The problem is simple. Eurostar is running too many non-revenue earning empty seats through the tunnel. The service started a year late and the build-up of passenger numbers has been far slower than expected two or three years ago. Poor marketing, an uncommercial ticket pricing policy and inadequate ticket distribution have been blamed for the failure of Eurostar to grab the mass market. To be fair, Eurostar has also been hit by technical problems that have not helped its image, but more importantly have forced it to pay massive fees to Railtrack.

The Government's hope is that Richard Branson's airline and marketing expertise and National Express's experience of running a high volume transport network can turn round Eurostar quickly enough to make its £2 billion financing package work. It is a massive gamble.

The City has needed some considerable persuading to throw money at another grandiose Euro-project after the Eurotunnel and Euro Disney debacles. A CTRL flop could tarnish the Private Finance Initiative for years to come and set back the slow

upgrading of Britain's Victorian transport infrastructure yet again.

Sir Derek Hornby, a former British Rail board member, now chairman of CTRL, does not underestimate the scale of the task.

It has been a frustrating few months for the consortium's negotiators, who only yesterday were given the go ahead to start talking to European Passenger Services (EPS), the state-owned company that will run Eurostar to date. Now L&C&R will have to move fast. The transfer of ownership of EPS takes place on April 1. By then, the consortium will want to be ready to unveil a massive overhaul of the Eurostar service. It

has set itself the extremely demanding target of bringing the train operations into profit within two years. If it fails, the painfully constructed financing package could start to unravel very quickly indeed.

Innovations are likely to include a broader array of tickets, cheaper fares at the bottom end of the market, an aggressive advertising campaign to make the British public sit up and take notice of Eurostar at last, and nothing short of a revolution in its ticket distribution arrangements. It would be fair to assume that lowest fares will be some way below the current best deal of £59. A weekend break standard fare of between

£30 and £40 may well be on the cards, bringing that impulse trip to Paris or Brussels within the reach of more.

L&C&R want Eurostar tickets to be far cheaper than fares on equivalent domestic InterCity journeys, in spite of having to pay an average £7 charge to Eurotunnel for every passenger taken through the tunnel. There will also be a rail miles scheme to encourage more frequent use.

At the top end, the current highly popular first class service is likely to be segmented into business, first and de luxe classes with quality of service and prices to match. A video in every seat may not be available to

all 800 passengers, but Terence Stamp and Helen Mirren are unlikely to feel uncomfortable in Eurostar first class after stretching their legs in a Virgin Atlantic jumbo.

The Virgin involvement also means a quantum leap in the scale of ticket availability. Eurostar tickets will be available from 16,000 travel agencies around the country compared with 1,000 currently. As yet, there are no plans to extend availability from British Rail stations.

Physical accessibility to the service will also be improved. At the moment the train can only be joined at Waterloo International, in the heart of London, or at Ashford International, in Kent. A key plank of the L&C&R proposal is the construction of a direct "north of London" rail connection between the link and the West and East coast Main Lines. This will allow passengers from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham to travel by train direct to Paris, Brussels and destinations beyond without having to enter the capital.

Of course, this grand transport vision unveiled yesterday by Sir Derek presupposes one crucial detail — that the link itself can be built on time and to cost. After ten years of preparation most of the pieces of the jigsaw are now in place, although the enabling legislation still has some way to go before Royal Assent next year. But there is one even more glaring omission. There is, to date, no one to build the thing. This is a novel approach to delivering an infrastructure scheme that ultimately won't L&C&R the bid, in spite of the profound reservations of the more conservatively minded officials at the Department of Transport.

But no one wants "another Eurotunnel" with a contractor group able to hold its transport operator to ransom after delivering a wildly over-budget project. This time, the train operator will be in the driving seat.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Late payers lock money away from possible investment

From Mr Lyndon Harrison, MEP
Sir, CBI's Tony Bonner is wrong to minimise concerns over the late payments culture which besets small businesses in the UK and in other parts of the EU (article, February 22). Indeed, Mr Bonner astonishingly omits the European dimension in his article. The lower participation rate of British SMEs in the developing Single European Market should concern us all. As should the European Commission's findings (C(95) 1075) that UK delay in payments is twice the European average, and that intentional late payments

account for over half of all delays in the UK compared to one third in the rest of the EU. The statistics worsen when the focus is solely concerned with cross-border payments. No wonder that some of our partners like Sweden and Finland, who have legislated in favour of a statutory right of interest, are worried by Britain's lax attitude to late payments, as characterised by our Deputy Prime Minister.

Nor, as Mr Bonner implies, is this a limited problem. Some £20,000 million is wrapped up in delayed payment in Britain, according to the Forum of Private Business.

This means considerable finance is locked away from entrepreneurial firms who might otherwise invest in expansion and jobs.

Finally, as Parliament's rapporteur on the Commission Recommendation on the subject, I shall be recommending a Statutory Right of Interest Directive along the lines of those that operate successfully in Sweden and the US's Prompt Payment Act. Yours faithfully, LYNDON HARRISON (Vice-President, European Parliament SME Intergroup), Watgate Building, Crane Wharf, Chester.

Lloyd's offer

From Mr James Hartley
Sir, Mr Dennis Franklin and others (February 23) seem very whimsical when suggesting in effect "settle at any price" in regard to the proposed Lloyd's settlement. It should be remembered *inter alia*: a) The Court of Appeal (with Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls) has ruled there is a *prima facie* case that Lloyd's, in the operation of its central fund, has been in breach of European competition law. (Without the fund, losses at Lloyd's would have been substantially lower). b) The case of fraud against Lloyd's and its representatives gets stronger by the day (viz. Mr Justine Creswell in Merrett case).

The working names, some of whom perpetrated the debacle through their failure to regulate Lloyd's, need a settlement more than anybody and should contribute substantially for it.

Accordingly, in order to bring a halt to litigation, names' losses should be capped at deposit level, although I believe that many, myself included, would consider voting for a settlement offer reasonably close to this. Yours truly, JAMES HARTLEY, The Old School House, Theddlethorpe All Saints, Nr Louth, Lincolnshire.

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Application has been made to the London Stock Exchange for the whole of the ordinary share capital of GWR Group plc issued and currently quoted on the Unlisted Securities Market of the London Stock Exchange to be admitted to the Official List of the London Stock Exchange (the "Official List"). It is expected that admission will become effective and dealings in the ordinary shares of 5p each of GWR Group plc will commence on 4 March 1996.

GWR Group plc

(Incorporated and registered in England and Wales under the Companies Act 1985 with registered number 715143)

Introduction to the Official List

by

Hambros Bank Limited

of the whole of the issued ordinary share capital of

GWR Group plc

Share Capital

Authorised
Number Amount
93,300,000 £4,665,000

Issued and fully paid
Number Amount
69,525,830 £3,476,292

Copies of the exempt-listing document may be obtained during normal business hours on any weekday (Saturdays and any public holidays excepted) from the Company Announcements Office, London Stock Exchange, Capel Court Entrance, off Bartholomew Lane, London EC2N 1HP (for collection only) from the date of this notice up to and including 4 March 1996 and from the date of this notice up to and including 15 March 1996 from:

Nicholson Graham & Jones
25-31 Moorgate
London EC2 6AR

GWR Group plc
The Watershed
Canons Road
Bristol BS99 7SN

1 March 1996

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Serco wins £180m port services contract

By PHILIP PANGALOS

SERCO GROUP, the facilities management to systems engineering company, has been awarded a contract worth £180 million to manage ports business for the Ministry of Defence at three ports.

The deal covers marine services at Portsmouth, Devonport, and the Clyde over the next five years. Serco will manage 139 vessels and take on responsibility for 930 staff from the Civil Service.

Richard White, chief executive of Serco, conceded that its management of the contract, which involves vessels ranging from tugs to transport vessels, would result in some job losses. He added: "We will

be making some reductions in staff. Details will emerge over the next few weeks."

The announcement accompanied a record rise in Serco's pre-tax profits to £15.2 million in the year to December 31, up from £12.5 million in the previous year.

Turnover surged 243 per cent to £323.3 million. About 40 per cent of group sales now come from overseas, after particularly strong growth from the Asia Pacific region.

George Gray, chairman of Serco, is optimistic about prospects. He said that the number and size of bids both currently submitted and recently won, in the UK and overseas, indicated that Serco's steady growth was likely to continue in 1996.

Mr White said that the company had enjoyed average revenue growth of more than 22 per cent in the past ten years, while taxable profit growth had averaged nearly 10 per cent during the same period.

He added that the group's international activities expanded satisfactorily during the year, with good progress being made in the US, the Philippines, Indonesia, New Zealand, Bermuda, Germany and, notably, Australia, where orders worth £150 million had been won in the past 13 months.

Mr White said: "We have our business secured for 1996 and we are building our business for the future."

Kevin Beeston, 33, has been appointed as the group's finance director.

There is a final dividend of 3.25p, payable on April 19, giving an improved total dividend of 4.7p (4p) for the year, from earnings up 25 per cent to 15p (12p) a share.

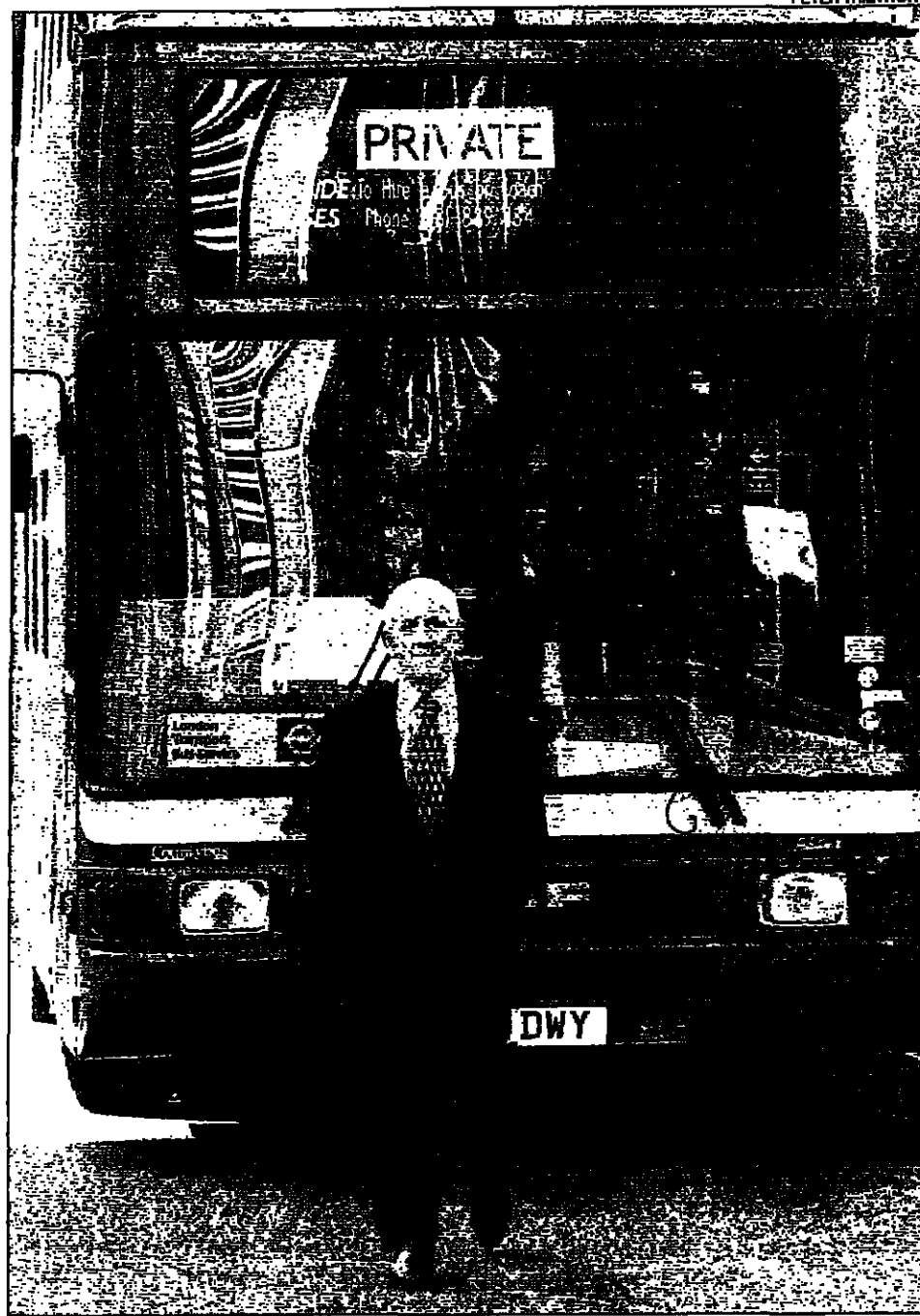
The shares added 10p to 440p.

Cash-rich Burford to grow

BURFORD HOLDINGS, the property company, has £154 million at its disposal to expand its portfolio after the demerger of Trocadero and the disposal of properties to Albion Property Investments.

Burford reported 1995 profits of £11.7 million before tax, compared with £14.7 million, and earnings of 3.04p a share (4.20p). In a poor property market net assets improved to 104.3p a share from 90.3p, excluding the value of the Trocadero shares distributed to investors.

Burford retains 25 per cent of Trocadero, worth about £62 million, or 21p per Burford share. Shares in Burford were unchanged at 107p yesterday.



Gordon Hodgson, of Cowie, which is acquiring County Bus Holdings for £8 million

Cowie bus operation expands as profits rise

By PHILIP PANGALOS

COWIE GROUP, the motor and bus company, is further expanding its bus operations after organic growth and acquisitions helped annual profits to advance 28 per cent as turnover drove through the £1 billion mark.

The group, which is already London's largest bus operator with more than 1,000 buses and 3,500 employees at Grey-Green, Cowie Leaside and Cowie South London, is boosting its bus operations by acquiring County Bus Holdings, County, which has 522 employees and runs a fleet of 206 buses and 16 coaches, is being acquired from West Midlands Travel, part of National Express, for £8 million. County operates 10 routes in north and east London and 29 main routes in Essex and Hertfordshire.

A full-year contribution from Leaside, compared with three months last time, and the acquisition of South London buses in January last year helped pre-tax profits to advance to £5.8 million (£4.6 million) in the year to December 31. Profits were dented by a £1.4 million exceptional charge relating to about 75 redundancies.

Turnover, boosted by acquisition, expanded to £1 billion (£934 million) in spite of the tough conditions in the motor sector and weak sales of N registration cars last year. Gordon Hodgson, chief executive, said there has been some recovery from last year, although the market remains flat. He said there had been a robust performance from finance and leasing operations and significantly expanded bus and coach operations.

Mr Hodgson said there were no plans to bid for a rail franchise at this stage. A final dividend of 7.35p, payable on April 17, gives a total of 10.4p (9.12p), from earnings ahead 19 per cent to 26.8p (22.6p) a share. Gearing fell to 168 per cent (241 per cent). The shares added 11p to 323p.

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

QPL to bring 750 jobs to Wales

MORE than 750 new jobs will be created in Wales as part of a £250 million investment plan by QPL International Holdings, of Hong Kong. Wafer-fab, a QPL subsidiary, will celebrate St David's Day today by announcing an expansion of its microchip manufacturing plant at Newport, Gwent. When the expansion is complete, the total workforce will exceed 1,200. By then, almost a quarter of QPL's worldwide workforce of 5,000 will be employed in Wales.

QPL moved to Gwent in December 1992, when it acquired the former Immos manufacturing plant from SGS Thomson, the French-Italian company. Since then, it has become Europe's leading producer of four inch and six inch silicon chips with integrally printed circuits. These wafers are tailored to meet the requirements of customers in the semiconductor and computer design industries.

North Sea revenue falls

NORTH SEA oil revenues during January fell for the first time in six months to average £29.57 million per day, according to the monthly oil index compiled by the Royal Bank of Scotland. But in spite of this drop, oil revenues remain 8 per cent higher than 12 months ago. North Sea oil production in January fell by 37,000 barrels per day (bpd) to average 2.58 million bpd. Gas production was virtually unchanged on the month with cold weather keeping demand high.

Newman Tonks in deal

NEWMAN TONKS, the architectural products company, has agreed to acquire Republic Industries for up to \$45.5 million. Republic, based in Chicago, is a privately owned manufacturer of automatic doors and door hardware sold under the Dor-O-Matic name. It is also a leading supplier in the UK through a subsidiary based in Warwickshire. In 1994, the business earned pre-tax profits of \$5.1 million on sales of \$43.7 million. The acquisition is being financed through borrowings and is expected to enhance earnings.

Stadium valued at £33m

STADIUM GROUP, a maker of injection moulded plastics and electronic assemblies, will be capitalised at £33.1 million when the company's shares begin trading on the stock market on March 11. The shares are being placed at 120p each. The flotation will raise £14.5 million, of which £4.3 million is receivable by the company. The balance will be shared by 80 members of the founding family, which no longer has a direct association with the company. Certain directors are to invest £123,150 to buy shares at the placing price.

Isotron advances

ISOTRON, a provider of sterilisation services for the healthcare industry, reported pre-tax profits of £1.68 million, up 15 per cent, in the half year to December 31, on turnover of £4.59 million, up 10 per cent. Earnings per share were 8.8p, against 7.2p. The interim dividend, payable on May 2, rises 10 per cent to 2.01p. The company attributed the improved figures to reduced operating losses at its troubled Irish division and a 7 per cent rise in revenue from its core medical market in Britain.

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EDUCATION

The club for clever people has plans for its fiftieth birthday, says Simon Midgley

Mensa puts faith in the gifted child

Mensa, the society for people with an exceptionally high IQ, has never been far from the limelight since its foundation 50 years ago. Established in England by Roland Berrill, a barrister, and Dr Lance Ware, a scientist and lawyer, the idea was to create a social and cultural club for the very bright.

But Mensa has been vilified regularly for being exclusive, smug and socially divisive. It is sneered at by some for being little more than a lonely hearts club for the bright but socially inadequate. In recent years the society has also been convulsed by a succession of wrangles involving allegations of financial irregularities against its senior executives and officers.

Harold Gale, its chief executive for 19 years, is pursuing a claim for unfair dismissal against Mensa at an industrial tribunal in the wake of similar allegations.

Such comic-opera shenanigans aside, however, the society is continuing to attract members apace. Today it has 38,000 members in the United Kingdom and 100,000 worldwide.

In August, celebrations to mark its vigour and longevity will include a clutch of celebratory dinners, concerts, lectures and debates. Later in the year some of Mensa's members are also planning to introduce some new — and augment several existing — educational initiatives to cater for exceptionally bright adults and children.

Since 1970 an affiliated organisation, the Mensa Foundation for Gifted Children (MFGC) has been working to try to identify and help exceptionally able children, especially those from impoverished backgrounds.

Mark Pilbeam, a trustee and director of the foundation, says that the idea is to appoint a Mensa representative in every local education authority to work with schools in helping to identify bright children with special educational needs.

Children identified by the regional talent-spotter could then be brought together locally for day trips to museums, art galleries and Saturday and summer schools. In addition, Mr Pilbeam says the children will benefit educationally and socially from sharing the company of others with high IQs.

"Of the total number of school-age children in this country," he says, "about 200,000 have IQs higher than 147 (the level necessary for entry to Mensa). Of that figure, more than 11,000 are from homes on supplementary benefit which are hampered by poverty."

Julie Baxter, another director of the MFGC, says: "One of the most important areas of concern is the need for children of exceptionally high IQ to have contact with others of similar ability."

"This is important to the socialisation of gifted children as well as to their education. It is now widely recognised that intellectually gifted children in unsuitable environments often succumb to peer pressure. They strive to hide their talents in order to gain acceptance from other children and

face the disturbing task of finding a way to be themselves at the same time as relating to others."

A second initiative, which is also designed to identify and help the exceptionally bright child, is the Mensa Family Roadshow, a series of family quizzes being held around Britain and

designed to test children's intelligence. The first quiz was staged at Swavesey Village College, in Cambridgeshire, early last month.

In April members of Junior Mensa — there are about 2,500 ranging from two-and-a-half years old to 15 — will be taking part in a Junior Mensa day of lectures, talks and computer sessions at Cambridge University.

For the future, the foundation, which is also in the process of setting up a support group for parents of gifted children, is considering a much more ambitious plan to help to create a national network of special schools for exceptionally able children.

James Howe, a linguistics consultant in south London, hopes to open a prototype school for exceptionally able children in his house in Dulwich on May 1. The idea is that 20 children, aged six to ten, will study mathematics, physics, chemistry, logic, philosophy, Latin and Japanese with the help of computers and sophisticated educational software.

Mr Howe, a former chief statistician in the Scottish Education Department, already has his son, Hume, 8, and daughter, Sei Mei, 7, taught at home. In the day they are



School house: James Howe's son, Hume, and daughter, Sei Mei, are already being taught at home

taught maths, physics and chemistry by a chemistry graduate and in the evenings Mr Howe and his wife, Melendres, a former mathematics university lecturer, take over. Mr Howe says that both children are well on their way to getting GCSEs in these subjects before they are 12 years old. When the school opens its doors to other children, he will share the teaching with the chemistry graduate.

Mr Howe calls the school a fusion (as in nuclear reaction) school. He will bring in other teachers — retired members of the profession and PhD students to teach the children about astrophysics, supernovas and the workings of the brain — as and when it is

necessary. They will be called "fusion fellows".

He plans to give his school six months to bed down and then to make an application through the Mensa Foundation to the National Lottery Board for a grant to fund another ten schools in Britain for exceptionally able children from low-income families. His dream is that there will eventually be a nationwide network of 200 fusion schools.

At the age of 11, the children will move back into state or private schools, having already passed their mathematics, physics and chemistry GCSEs and having been taught to think rationally and scientifically. This, Mr Howe says,

will give them freedom in their teenage years to study design, music or whatever other interests they develop.

It is important, he says, to bring out the potential of the nation's brightest children. In the 21st century fewer and fewer people will be responsible for generating the gross domestic product, so the importance of maximising the skills of those who are working will be paramount.

The initiative is slightly Utopian or faintly batty, depending on your point of view. One thing at least is certain: if the scheme becomes a reality, Mensa may feel confident of a tailor-made source of fresh young members.

When dress is a signal for battle

Alexander Davidson on why some schools are ditching uniform

The murder of the London headmaster Philip Lawrence was an extreme and tragic expression of the hostility some gangs of disaffected youths. The sight of school uniforms seems particularly likely to arouse their resentment. Every detail of the uniform, from the stripe of a tie to the cut of a jacket evokes reactions born of centuries of class conflict.

Provoked by nothing more than a hat or blazer, gangs will gleefully taunt their victim and brand him a snob or, far more serious, demand money, often with menace.

Perhaps the underprivileged are getting their own back. In the 16th century, it was the poor child in his blue charity cassock who had to endure taunts and aggression from the casually clad sons of the aristocracy in the street. To add insult to injury, the ankle-length garments prevented him from making a swift getaway.

What goes around comes around. The charity cassock is now worn by today's privileged pupils of Christ's Hospital in West Sussex and other old charity schools. Some find the cassock prickly and cumbersome — but the biggest worry is that it sticks out like a sore thumb.

In the interests of the survival of the more distinctive uniforms, their wearers have learnt to sidestep trouble. Pupils of King's School, Canterbury, when confronted by local louts, would take to their heels in their black-and-white trousers, stiff winged collars and boaters, they were called "penguins".

Another tactic is to appear streetwise when confronted by a gang. Girls of one grammar school in Chatham, Kent, long used to being teased about their uniform, had the bright idea of wearing their boaters suggestively pulled over to one side. For some, it got them out of the frying pan into the fire.

The real rebels try to ditch their uniform altogether. Pupils of certain grammar schools in the Medway towns have hurled their caps into the local river every July. Pupils of one well-known public school send their boaters skimming under a moving

bus. In many schools teachers and parents have eventually received the message, and headgear has been abolished.

If all else fails, a uniform gets more than its share of wear and tear. Boys of Chatham Grammar School, for instance, have used blazers as goalposts in football games. They have picked off the buttons to play liddlywinks, and have tactfully covered the school badge while walking to and from school. The more trouble caused, the more a protest is registered.

However, guardians of the traditional uniform are succumbing to the pressure. Schoolwear is gradually becoming more standardised, often in reaction to an "incident". In the 1950s, for instance, Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, abolished the rule that shorts were compulsory dress after locals asked some boys during a school trip to Oxford which Borstal they came from.

Hand in glove with standardisation of schoolwear has been a powerful resistance to it. The dreariest establishments insist on elaborate uniforms to the end, even when they are impractical, expensive and, frankly, absurd. These are often the minor fee-paying or grammar schools, keen to appear more upmarket to impress parents.

It is our leading public schools that have pioneered the decline of a rigid school uniform. Pupils of Wellington and Ampleforth, for example, often wear little more than smart casual clothes. Harrovians no longer scrupulously wear their straw hats outside the school gates.

St Paul's Girls' School, London, does without a uniform altogether, yet its pupils dress to the highest standards. They travel to school in glorious anonymity and have no fear of street battles. It is a truism that academic standards in our leading schools are higher than ever, while social standards are unaffected by more relaxed dress — two good reasons why parents queue to send their children there. An elaborate uniform is no longer just a suspect value, it has become a liability.



Lord Gnome: the early years

Jonathan Sale continues his occasional series on celebrities and their universities



Richard Ingrams contemplates his long journalistic journey from Oxford to *The Oldie*

Richard Ingrams is not a "clear-desk" man. "You couldn't even get across his room for old coffee cups, records, half-finished essays," recalls his Oxford contemporary, Andrew Osmond. Lord Gnome's cluttered space at *The Oldie* is much the same, except that nowadays it is articles instead of essays which cause the health hazard.

There has been a continuity too among his journalistic colleagues; some, such as Paul Foot, date back to schooldays at Shrewsbury. Their first communal writings had them hauled before the headmaster; subsequently they appeared in front of judges, which is progress of a sort. At University College, Oxford, they received their first libel writ.

"Oxford was perhaps Richard's happiest time," writes Harry Thompson in his excellent *Richard Ingrams — Lord of the Gnomes*.

"If you had been away for two years in the Army and prior to that at a public school, this was the first time when you had freedom to do whatever you liked," agrees Ingrams. "You had your own room and could come and go as you pleased. In my little group, we saw ourselves as being in rebellion to the general tone of

the college, which was very hearty. Sir Robin Butler was president of the JCR at University, although as Cabinet Secretary and *Private Eye* Editor subsequently, the two did not exactly grow closer over years. Fortunately the college did

not pressurise Ingrams on the work front. Tipped off by his older brother, he realised that it was possible to slice a year from his four-year Greats course. This meant that he was

jobs, as it were, in student journalism.

"The nucleus of people who started *Private Eye* wouldn't have got together without Oxford. Apart from Paul Foot and John Wells,

"the key figure was Peter Osborne, who started *Mesopotamia*. One issue of this magazine provided a packet of mustard and cress which could be grown on the cover." Willie Rushton, whose lack of Latin O

level prevented him from following his fellow-Shrewsbury chums to Oxford, became an honorary undergraduate who came up at weekends to provide them with emergency supplies of his cartoons.

'You had freedom to do whatever you liked'

"Parson's Pleasure" was more like *Private Eye*, says Ingrams of another publication for which he was chief jester, and at which he received a libel writ for an article inherited from the previous editor. He was also involved with *Isis*, which Foot at one time edited.

"My memory of those magazines, and the early *Eye*, is doing them in someone's bedroom and people lying on the floor. It is the gang approach to journalism, done by a little gang of people who are all friends."

For the young satirist Ingrams there was, as yet, no scandal in his journalism. Nor was there, he declares, in his personal relationships. "My feeling about Oxford ladies is that they were very innocent compared to nowadays." But not, according to rumours, totally innocent. Several, like John Bejeman's daughter Candida Lyett

Lucett, pined for him from afar. Secretaries at *Private Eye* were later to know the feeling. Another mystery is that Ingrams really thought — and still thinks — that he could have been happy as a broadcasting executive. "None of us seriously thought of a career. Then the BBC, as part of its recruiting drive, laid on a big party for Oxford's crème-de-la-crème. We were all asked to it and thought that we'd all get jobs."

In fact, when their applications flooded in, they were all rejected, with the exception of a man later imprisoned for a white-collar offence. Instead, the gang decided to found a magazine and the rest is (libel) history.

"I wouldn't have minded at all working for the BBC," says Ingrams. "In those days I was quite straight."

WHERE THE CUTS FALL

University	Students	Funding (£m) 95/96	% cut 96/97
Anglia	8,853	24.2	-23.8
Aston	3,785	16.7	-16.0
Bath	4,428	22.4	-21.8
Birmingham	11,470	68.0	-64.2
Bournemouth	6,449	16.2	-15.9
Bradford	5,515	23.9	-23.1
Brighton	7,398	24.4	-23.8
Bristol	7,051	53.4	-52.1
Brunel	7,280	25.5	-25.0
Cambridge	9,832	90.7	-86.7
Central England	8,050	27.8	-27.1
Central Lancashire	9,800	32.1	-32.0
City	2,691	14.9	-14.6
Cowen	8,793	33.1	-32.4
Cranfield	4,428	15.5	-14.8
De Montfort	15,295	44.0	-42.9
Derby	8,101	17.3	-17.2
Exeter	7,845	26.1	-25.4
East Anglia	5,073	23.2	-22.9
East London	7,114	25.7	-25.0
Essex	3,457	16.8	-16.4
Goldsmiths College London	3,745	12.0	-11.9
Greenwich	10,019	29.3	-28.7
Huddersfield	9,581	29.0	-28.3
Hull	7,891	25.4	-24.9
Humberside	5,884	24.9	-24.2
Imperial College London	5,676	24.4	-23.8
King's College London	5,171	21.7	-21.1
Kingston	4,108	14.9	-14.8
Lancaster	4,986	21.4	-21.1
Lancashire	4,986	21.4	-21.1
Loughborough	13,677	69.0	-67.8
Luton	11,024	37.0	-36.4
Leeds Metropolitan	6,481	33.0	-32.1
Leeds	8,289	58.5	-56.5
Leeds University	11,024	37.0	-36.4
Leeds Sch of Economics	1,745	14.3	-13.9
London Guildhall	5,875	18.8	-18.3
Loughborough	7,398	31.3	-30.4
Luton	8,023	16.5	-16.1
Manchester	12,889	78.7	-77.0
Ulster	3,452	26.5	-25.3
Nottingham	17,096	53.1	-52.0
Nottingham Trent	15,890	40.5	-40.0
Open	3,007	11.4	-11.0
Oxford	9,832	89.6	-86.5
Oxford Brookes	5,889	22.2	-21.7
Plymouth	12,857	37.0	-36.5
Portsmouth	8,204	31.9	-31.3
Queen Mary & Westfield	10,020	34.7	-34.0
Reading	8,850	51.0	-50.8
Sheffield Hallam	13,167	43.5	-42.7
Sheffield	7,846	47.1	-46.3
South Bank	7,892	31.7	-30.7
Sunderland	9,701	28.7	-28.3
Surrey	3,979	23.4	-22.8
Sussex	5,881	29.0	-28.6
Teeside	9,589	20.8	-20.4
Thames Valley	5,947	20.8	-20.3
University College London	7,101	64.6	-63.1
Warwick	7,025	36.2	-35.7
Westminster	7,017	34.8	-34.1
West of England	12,288	35.7	-35.0
Wolverhampton	11,534	33.0	-32.5
York	4,262	22.7	-22.0

University cash fears confirmed

YESTERDAY'S grant allocations confirmed universities' worst fears about their financial position in the next academic year. None will escape a cut in cash terms and, allowing for inflation, institutions will have to manage with 5 per cent less.

The scale of the cuts nationally has been known since last November's Budget. Vice-chancellors' alarm was reflected in their threat to impose entrance fees of £300 a year. But the table (left) brings home the impact on individual institutions.

Only a few colleges specialising in teacher training have escaped the axe, and their extra money is earmarked for planned increases in student numbers. Other institutions will receive funding for similar numbers of students to this year.

The overall number of funded places will be 739,000 — 5,000 down on 1995-96. Universities and colleges will be allowed to recruit up to 2 per cent more students than the official figure without being penalised.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England, which produced the allocations, has spread the cuts around, rather than protecting some universities and targeting others. Next year's settlement, which will follow a new round of research assessments, may be less even-handed.

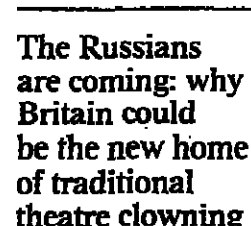
The table's first column shows the maximum number of students to be funded, the middle columns the recurrent and capital grants for this year and next, followed by the percentage cut.

EDUCATION COURSES AND APPOINTMENTS
APPEAR ON PAGES 28 AND 29.

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Memories of the Festival of Britain, as the Fifties Festival opens. Plus (right) some of the Fifties' best ballets reviewed

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POP 4

Sting's latest album, *Mercury Falling*, is further evidence of a talent in a tailspin



POP 5

... while, hot from Belgium, Evil Superstars have fashioned a strenuously zany debut disc

THE TIMES POP ARTS



CHOICE 1

The cellist Ralph Kirshbaum hits 50 in good company



CHOICE 2

My Cousin Rachel, by Daphne du Maurier, comes to Basingstoke

NEW ALBUMS: Once-great former Police chief charged with wasting public's time

Loitering without intent

STING

Mercury Falling
(A&M 540 486)

THE reconfiguration of British pop over the past two years will have done little to dent Sting's enduring popularity. But it has rudely stripped whatever remained of his fashionable appeal, leaving him marooned once and for all in the Dad-rock flatlands.

Unfortunately, this turn of events coincides with an album which sees something of a furrow returning to the blond troubadour's brow. *Mercury Falling* offers nothing so daunting as the miserable introspection of 1991's *The Soul Cages*, but neither is it brightened by the jaunty mood and broad streak of humour which so enlivened his last album, *Ten Summoner's Tales* (unless you count *I'm So Happy I Can't Stop Crying*, a number surely lifted straight from the Clive James guide to writing fake country songs).

Lyrics such as "I walk through the day/My coat around my ears/I look for my companion/I have to dry my tears" are printed on the accompanying booklet amid rustic pictures of Sting wandering soulfully among the woodlands of his country estate.

This heart-searching tone surfaces in a variety of genteel settings. There is a super-tasteful bossa nova, *La Belle Dame Sans Regrets*, which he sings in French; an upmarket Stax soul pastiche, *All Four Seasons*; a couple of country singalongs à la Jimmy Nail; the dreary, gospel-flavoured pop of his current single *Let Your Soul Be Your Pilot*; and even a restrained rocker with an odd time signature called *I Hung My Head* which has faint echoes of the Police.

The musicianship is superlative, the performances buffed to an eerie perfection and the tunes swift to get under the skin. But it is hard

to work up enthusiasm for an album of such limited cheer and with so little fire in its belly.

EVIL SUPERSTARS

Low is Okay
(Paradox/A&M PDDXCD 002)

THEY are dancing to a different tune in Belgium these days. After the surprising international impact last year of art-rock oddballs dEUS, here come Evil Superstars, a five-man experimental pop group from a village on the outskirts of Antwerp.

Operating in the tradition of the great American eccentrics, Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart, they have fashioned a debut packed with zany ideas and unlikely incident. Heavy rock riffs and crazy bottleneck guitar lines vie with tinkling vaudeville piano, sudden, unpredictable tempo changes and lyrics that seem to be hinting at some deep meaning, but could equally well reflect a lack of familiarity with the English language. "My darling learns me a lot, I try so hard to understand her/From cosmopancakes to Jackson Pollock's socksunders." Well, it's certainly food for thought.

NEIL YOUNG

Dead Man
(Vapor Records/ Reprise 9362-46171)

NOT TO be confused with Tim Robbins' film *Dead Man Walking*, this is music composed and played by Neil Young for the soundtrack of



Sting plumbs the depths of his soul and comes up with nothing on *Mercury Falling*

the Jim Jarmusch movie, *Dead Man*. Comprising little more than the sort of idle doodling that Young doubtless comes up with whenever he picks up an electric guitar in private, it is a pretty desultory experience, whatever its effect in the context of the movie.

Little is added by the voice of Johnny Depp reading extracts from the writing of William Blake, and other dialogue

from the film, save to give the impression that the listener has stumbled into some sort of surreal poetry-cum-guitar-tuning workshop.

THE AUTEURS

After Murder Park
(Hut/Virgin DGHUT 33)

IN MANY ways the Auteurs define what was wrong with British pop before it turned into Britpop. Their first album, *New Wave*, released in 1993, was a masterpiece that should have catapulted them into the premier division. Instead, they foundered, thanks to their puny live shows and the self-absorbed attitude of singer and guitarist Luke Haines, a man more at ease scoring points than writing hits.

Their third album, *After Murder Park*, is a joyless collection which finds Haines

squeezing fresh drops of poison from his heart with dark, self-conscious relish. The music exerts a haunting fascination, while the words to songs such as *Unsolved Child Murder*, *Tombstone* and *New Brat in Town* resonate with obscure, malevolent meaning: "I'll give you half an hour, make a phone call/Pack a suitcase, break your fingers," for example.

Produced by sonic hardliner Steve Albini — who ruined P.J. Harvey's second album and very nearly torpedoed Nirvana's *In Utero* — *After Murder Park* is an album of stark moods and stunted ambition. And, apart from Haines and his small coterie of similarly misanthropic admirers, who needs this stuff nowadays?

DAVID SINCLAIR

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- 1 *What's the Story* Morning Glory? Oasis (Creation)
- 2 *Jagged Little Pill* Alanis Morissette (Maverick)
- 3 *Blaze* Fruit & L M People (Deconstruction)
- 4 *Expecting to Fly* Bluebelles (Superior Quality)
- 5 *Paul Weller* (Go Discs)
- 6 *Different Class* Blur (Food)
- 7 *The Bends* Radiohead (Parlophone)
- 8 *Life* Simply Red (East West)
- 9 *Definitely Maybe* Oasis (Creation)
- 10 *Don't Stop* Status Quo (Polygram TV)

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South Africa take cue from Cronje's inspiring example

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN KARACHI

KARACHI (Pakistan won toss): South Africa (2pts) beat Pakistan by five wickets

IF SOUTH Africa fail to win the World Cup, it will not be because their methods are frivolous or that they feel intimidated. Pakistan, assisted by a deafening partisan crowd at the National Stadium, put the pretenders through a thorough examination of their lines yesterday and could detect no flaws, no nervous stumbles.

Instead, it was the holders, and their vast support, who silently retreated to study the revised script. Victory has ensured that South Africa will win group B and return here, as they had hoped, for the quarter-final. Pakistan will now almost certainly travel to India, where they may even be paired with their co-hosts.

If that happens, the game will be played in an atmosphere still more frenzied than yesterday's, though perhaps not by much. The match with South Africa had long been a diary entry for the cricket lovers of Pakistan — which means the entire population of 140 million — for they required victory to substantiate the passionate wish that a title won on a faraway continent could be defended at home. They did not get it.

The significance of the cricket yesterday was in approach and application. South Africa had a game plan and they were sufficiently disciplined to retain it through the volatility of the occasion. Pakistan utterly lost the plot.

Their failure to defend 242 was partly self-inflicted. They chose an eccentric side, that had its vulnerability exposed by injury, and they offered South Africa three extra overs through wides and no-balls. Perhaps, however, South Africa had no need of such charity for, through the day, they were the side showing the resilience

that will be needed in the final fortnight.

Hansie Cronje was the embodiment of the South African spirit. Every time that Pakistan claimed a foothold, Cronje was there to shake them off. He did it with the ball, with his intuitive leadership and finally, decisively, with the bat.

South Africa were 125 for four when Cronje made his delayed appearance and they could afford no further loss. The captain, frowning with concentration, played an innings of such unshakeable self-denial that the subdued crowd were not the only Pakistanis who gave up before the end.

Wasim Akram, the Pakistan captain, admitted afterwards that he had misread the pitch, but this could not fully explain the inclusion of only two seam bowlers in a threadbare attack. Its deficiencies were plain when Aamir Sohail was

inhibited by a groin strain, though it did not prevent him standing in as wicketkeeper when Rashid Latif retired with a bruised finger. It made no sense to omit Aqib Javed, the third fast bowler, and so long as Pakistan make such basic misjudgments, and compound them with waywardness on the field, a team like South Africa will beat them more often than not.

It was quite an achievement to restrict Pakistan to 242 in these conditions, and the credit is shared by Cronje and Paul Adams. Cronje boldly brought himself on for the twelfth over, with Sohail and Saad Anwar already advanced to 52. Bowling a series of floaters, he had Anwar caught at short extra-cover and Ijaz Ahmed leg-before within his first four deliveries.

Sohail had begun with all the neuroses of one out for single figures against Holland and United Arab Emirates and he might have been run out and caught at slip before scoring. It does him great credit that he discovered nerve and touch and proceeded to make 111, batting for all but an over of the innings.

Even Sohail, however, could make little of Adams. His controlled spell, rewarded with the wicket of Salim Malik, fully endorsed the decision to delay his World Cup debut for a side who knew nothing of him. It was a triumph for Bob Woolmer, the coach, and he enjoyed another when his team replied.

The spinners were on swiftly after the first seven overs had yielded 50 and they were persistently swept by every South African. The pre-arranged tactic cost Kirsten his wicket, but, importantly, it cost Mustaq Ahmed his control. Cullinan and Cronje retained theirs stoically and Pollock arrived to see South Africa home in lordly fashion with 34 balls in hand.



With Palfreman, the wicketkeeper, lending strong support, Cronje won this leg-before appeal against Ijaz Ahmed

Line forms for Waqar

WAQAR YOUNIS will seek a new county after it was confirmed yesterday that Surrey had signed Brian McMillan, the South Africa all-rounder, on a two-year contract believed to be worth £100,000 (Simon Wilde writes). Waqar played for Surrey in 1990, 1991 and 1993 and was hoping to return in 1997 after touring England with Pakistan this summer.

"Waqar will be disappointed because Surrey had said they wanted him for 1997," his agent said yesterday. "His contract with the club expired last year, but they told him not to talk to other counties because they wanted him back. Waqar will play county cricket again for whoever wants him. We've had three inquiries already."

WORLD CUP DETAILS

GROUP A

	P	W	T	NR	Pts	NRR
Sri Lanka	3	3	0	0	9	1.63
Australia	3	2	0	1	6	1.13
India	3	2	0	1	6	0.86
West Indies	3	1	0	2	3	-2.07
Kenya	4	1	0	3	2	-2.50
Zimbabwe	3	1	0	2	3	-2.03

RESULTS: West Indies beat Zimbabwe by six wickets, Hyderabad, Sri Lanka beat Australia, Colombo, India beat Sri Lanka by seven wickets, Cuttack, Sri Lanka beat Zimbabwe by six wickets, Colombo, India beat West Indies by five wickets, Gwalior, Australia beat Kenya by 37 runs, Visakhapatnam, Sri Lanka beat West Indies, Colombo, India beat India by 16 runs, Bombay, Zimbabwe beat Kenya by five wickets, Pune, Kenya beat West Indies by 73 runs, Pune.

FIXTURES: Today, Australia v Zimbabwe, Nagpur (02.30), Tomorrow, India v Sri Lanka, Delhi (03.30), Mar 4: West Indies v Australia, Jaipur (03.30), Mar 5: India v Zimbabwe, Kanpur (03.30), Mar 6: Sri Lanka v Kenya, Kanpur (03.30).

GROUP B

	P	W	T	NR	Pts	NRR
South Africa	4	4	0	0	12	1.76
New Zealand	4	3	0	1	9	0.94
Pakistan	4	3	0	1	9	1.24
England	4	2	0	2	6	0.14
Holland	4	2	0	2	6	-1.92
UAE	4	0	0	4	0	-2.53

RESULTS: New Zealand beat England by 11 runs, Ahmedabad, South Africa beat UAE by 169 runs, Rawalpindi, New Zealand beat Holland by 119 runs, Vadodra, England beat UAE by eight wickets, Peshawar, South Africa beat New Zealand by five wickets, Faisalabad, England beat Holland by 48 runs, Peshawar, Pakistan beat UAE by nine wickets, Gwalior, South Africa beat England by 78 runs, Rawalpindi, Pakistan beat Holland by eight wickets, Lahore, New Zealand beat UAE by 109 runs, Faisalabad, South Africa beat Pakistan by five wickets, Karachi.

FIXTURES: Today, Holland v UAE, Lahore (09.30), Mar 3: Pakistan v England, Karachi (04.00), Mar 5: Holland v South Africa, Rawalpindi (04.00), Mar 6: Pakistan v New Zealand, Lahore (09.30).

QUARTER-FINALS

Mar 9: Winner group A v 4th group B, Faisalabad (04.00), Mar 9: 2nd group A v winner group B, Bangalore (09.00), Mar 11: Winner group B v 4th group A, Karachi (04.00), Mar 11: 3rd group B v runner-up group A, Madras (09.00). SEMI-FINALS: Mar 13: Faisalabad winner v Bangalore winner, Calcutta (09.00), Mar 14: Karachi winner v Madras winner, Chennai (09.00). FINAL: Mar 17: Lahore.

IN BRIEF

Hicks has place in semi-final

ANDY HICKS reached the semi-finals of the European Open snooker tournament in Valletta, Malta yesterday with a 5-1 victory over Tony Chappel, of Swansea (Phil Yates writes).

Hicks, a left-hander from Devon, compiled breaks of 52, 55, 48, 40 and a closing 110 clearance — his third century of the tournament and his fifth in professional competition — and now awaits the winner of the match between Peter Ebdon and Tony Drago.

Steelers' title

Ice hockey: Sheffield Steelers won their second successive British league championship after a 7-2 home win over Nottingham Panthers on Wednesday. Newcastle Warriors edged closer to a place in the play-offs with a 13-4 defeat of Milton Keynes.

Street races in

Skating: Picabo Street, the newly-crowned world champion, won a World Cup downhill race in Narvik, Norway, yesterday in a combined time of 1min 38.38sec over a shortened course run in two legs because of the danger of high winds.

Grindley returns

Athletics: David Grindley, the British 400 metres record-holder, enters his first race on full training for three years today. Grindley, who has missed two world championships, a European championship and a Commonwealth Games because of an Achilles tendon injury, competes in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

Gooding victory

Real tennis: Michael Gooding, 31, the Hatfield House professional, beat Frank Filippelli, of Australia, 7-6 in their best-of-13-sets world championship elimination, winning four of the last five sets as he staged a dramatic recovery on the third and final day of their match in Melbourne.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Last week, in the refresher article, I started talking about "second hand plays low". To remind you, this is the generally sound advice that, if you are the second person to play to a trick, then you should play a low card.

When you have two honours, it is a different matter.

• A 10 6 4

• Q J 8

• K 9 3 2

• A K 10 6

• Q J 8

• K 9 3 2

• A K 10 6

• Q J 8

• K 9 3 2

• A K 10 6

• Q J 8

• K 9 3 2

• A K 10 6

• Q J 8

• K 9 3 2

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KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

RAC triumphs

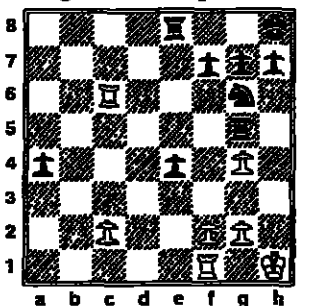
The Royal Automobile Club has won its first round match in the Martell Trophy knock-out competition against the team from Simpson's-in-the-Strand. Match results were as follows (RAC names first): Malcolm Pein defeated Michael Hennigan; Roger Smolensky drew with Ali Mortazavi; Henry Mutkin lost to Bob Wade and Robert Feather beat Brian Clivaz. Here is one game from the match. Black's 16th move cleverly nets a pawn, after which White's position dissolves.

White: Henry Mutkin
Black: Bob Wade
RAC v Simpson's
February 1996

Irregular Opening

1	d4	Nf6	d5
2	c4	Nf6	d5
3	Nc3	c6	Nf6
4	Ba2	Oa5	Nf6
5	Bf3	e5	Nf6
6	Ba3	Be7	Nf6
7	h3	Nb7	Nf6
8	Nge2	Oa7	Nf6
9	Oa4	Rb8	Nf6
10	Ng3	Nf8	Nf6
11	Oa2	a5	Nf6
12	Ra2	Rb8	Nf6
13	Ba2	Kf6	Nf6
14	Kf1	Ng6	Nf6
15	Nf5	Nb4	Nf6
16	Nb4	Bx5	Nf6
17	Ng5	Bg6	Nf6
18	Bg5	b5	Nf6
19	d5	bxa4	Nf6
20	dcx6	Oa6	Nf6
21	Bf5	a4	Nf6
22	Bf5	a4	Nf6

Diagram of final position



a b c d e f g h

Chess festival

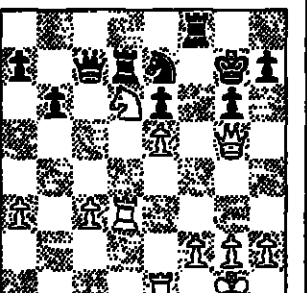
During March and April, there will be a chess festival at Mortimer Comprehensive School, South Tyneside. Events include grandmaster simultaneous displays, speed chess, international tournaments, 24-hour chessathons and all-play-all events from beginner standard to international level. For further details, contact Charles Storey, the festival director, on 0191 2811681.

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Potugayevsky — Gheorghiu, Skopje, 1968. Lev Potugayevsky, who died last year, was renowned as a very dangerous attacking player. How did he demonstrate his sharp tactical eye in this position?



Solution, page 38

WORLD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

LATREDE
a. One who worships
b. To be slow
c. A measure of latitude

LOGGIA
a. An aimless follower
b. A herbaceous flower
c. An open-sided arcade

MASSOOLAH
a. A surf boat
b. An inverted object
c. One who fears lifting

MIRYACHIT
a. Mindless conversation
b. A mischievous elf
c. A nervous disease

Answers on page 38

ENJOY AN 8-DAY CRICKET AND HOLIDAY PRIZE IN LAHORE WORTH £6,000



Win a trip to the World Cup final

The Times, in association with Pakistan International Airlines, is offering readers the chance to win an eight-day trip for two to the World Cup final in Lahore, with a prize worth more than £6,000.

The winner of our competition, and a companion, will fly Club Class to Lahore on March 13 and spend six nights at a top hotel. The itinerary includes guided tours of the city and tickets to the final on Sunday, March 17.

HOW TO ENTER

Below are all the cricketing questions. Rearrange the letter clues to give the name of one of the host stadiums in this year's World Cup. Call our hotline number with your answer. It is open until midnight on Sunday. The winner will be chosen at random from all correct entries received.

Q5. Which cricket ground hosted the first World Cup final? You need the fourth letter.

Q4. Who did Mike Brearley open the batting with in the 1979 final? You need the first and fourth letters of the first name.

Q3. Which country has the lowest score in World Cup history? You need the last two letters of the country.

Q2. Which country did Mohinder Amarnath play for? You need the first letter of your answer.

Q1. Who are the current World Cup holders? You need the second letter of your answer.

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England's favourite gentle giant is ready to break Scottish hearts again

Richards ambles back into the fray

By DAVID MILLER

THEY called Primo Camera, the statuesque Italian world heavyweight boxing champion of the Thirties, "The Ambling Alp". It is a sobriquet that would also fit Dean Richards, England's massive No 8, who, in the spectrum of varying competitive temperament, sits comfortably at the opposite end from "intense".

On the tenth anniversary of his international rugby debut, Richards has been recalled for the grand slam match against Scotland tomorrow, for a widely speculated range of reasons: experience, courage, tactical know-how, psychological inspiration of the others. To observe the benign demeanour of this motorway



Huge, impassive and immovable, Richards is as reassuring for England as he is intimidating for opponents. Photograph: Marc Aspland



patrol policeman at the squad's training headquarters, you might think that he had been called in just to pour the beer.

To say that he is relaxed would be an understatement. He has that reassuring solidity of a St Bernard, yet this is the man who dislikes training, avoids interviews, shuns publicity and is unconcerned with calculating why he is regarded as talismanic, one of the best ever in his position.

Like many of the greatest sports performers, he has no intuition regarding those qualities that create his excellence. As far as he is concerned, his eminence was something that just happened. He is quietly proud of this reputation, aware of it, grateful, but wears it like a comfy old pullover rather than a medal on his chest.

"A bit more experience? A cool head?" He is reluctant to be specific about why he has been recalled, but is glad to feel that he is once more needed. At 32, it is a great honour, he admits. There have been highs and lows. That is how it goes. Yes, deep down, he is very nationalistic, "but

you can't be affected by emotion on the pitch". It is the same cerebral, detached manner that has to remain in place when dealing with motorway pile-ups, with the dying. "You take things as they come, learn to live with it," he said. "You can't afford to be emotionally involved."

Here is a paradox: a mixture of the soft and hard. At present, he is taking an 18-month sabbatical to look after Jessica, his three-year-old daughter, while Nicky, his wife, takes a post-graduate teaching degree course. Yet you sense that it would be less agreeable to meet him head on as a felon than as an opposing forward.

The focal, decision-making positions in a team are Nos 2, 8, 9, 10 and 15. Especially No 8 and the stand-off half. It is said that Richards's greatness

lies in always being where the ball is, never mind his lack of pace. "Instinctive," he said, almost as though shy about it. It is a word that he uses repeatedly to explain, or deflect, discussion of his attributes. There is no doubt that Jack Rowell wants him to help to control the game — determine the pattern of play.

"You do get called upon to change the play, say, but I haven't a particular motive," Richards said. "You don't realise you've got it, instinctively analysing the way a game's going. I hope I've still got it."

Rowell is busy greeting players in the hotel foyer while we are talking. Richards asks what time training starts. Two o'clock, Rowell replies, adding

with a smile: "but that never affects you!" The joke among colleagues on those occasions when Richards misses training with Leicester is that he is busy locking up prisoners. Ask him what is his training routine and he replies that he does not have one, though he

'He has that reassuring solidity of a St Bernard'

does, reluctantly, attend Leicester's twice-weekly sessions.

"Maybe I should have trained more, over the years," he said, "but you have to be comfortable with what you are doing and I didn't like it." Some of the Scots think that they will expose his lack of speed tomorrow, but not Ian

McGeachan, the former Lions coach, who knows too well the Alp's capacity.

Richards is undismayed by Scotland's habitual manipulation of the rules, epitomised by offside tactics at Twickenham last year and deliberate collapsing of the scrum in the last

victory over England, at Murrayfield in 1990. "Scotland have always played to the limit of the laws," he said, "and you have to accept the referee's whistle. If the referee doesn't penalise offside, you get away with it."

Coming into a team strangely regarded as underdogs, never mind that England have not lost the Calcutta Cup for six years, Richards is optimistic about the development of Rowell's derided revolution in

tactical approach. "With confidence [among players], it will come," Richards said. "Things will start to open up. Scotland are good, but I think that they are there for the taking."

His attitude is in line with Rowell's assertion that the team's morale has been high for every match, last year and this, whatever the performance or the public reaction.

Perhaps Richards's most poignant observation, however, is on the devaluation of the England shirt by professionalism. "It used to be symbolic," he said, "a white shirt with a red rose. Now, it's a different strip every season, the significance is diminished. It doesn't lessen the honour of selection, but the shirt has lost something. It's not a problem for me. Just a pity about the rose." Policemen, too, can have sentiment.

Dublin eager for party to begin

Let us forget, amid all the feverish rugby hubbub going on north of the border, there is the little matter of Dublin to consider. Certainly, all the glittering prizes are on show in Murrayfield: the beggar's cap at Lansdowne Road. Yet there are those who view things from a different perspective. The traffic is not entirely northward bound. There is a feast to be anticipated across the water.

Over the past few days there has been a vast airlift out of Cardiff to Dublin. Yesterday, 7,500 people left the airport. Another 4,000 had already left. As if this was not a surprising figure, others are leaving from Bristol, Standed and other points. More are crossing the water from Holyhead and Fishguard to bring



GERALD DAVIES

Rugby Commentary

the total of this mass exodus to 27,000. Were there to be a Pimms line around the oil-stricken coast of Wales, the land mass, bearing a lighter load of population, would surely make a significant shift.

This enthusiastic contingent is following a team that has yet to win a match this championship season and had lost five in the previous 12 months. Hardly the stuff to convince the mind or stir the heart that there is some kind of celebration at hand. Fur-

thermore, Ireland's record is equally lacking in distinction. Thus, the aim of both teams is to avoid finishing at the bottom of the heap. Yet people will travel. There is a rare kind of loyalty at work.

Is the pursuit this weekend simply for the sheer and unashamed love of rugby football? To an extent, I suppose it is, but it is far from providing the whole truth. The game may be in Dublin, but the visitors will be scattered hither and yon to villages and towns beyond the city's limits. Dublin, however, will be the focus.

The figure of 27,000 represents half the ground capacity, with Wales's allocation 8,500. The fixture has its idiosyncratic attractions, but for the large majority of those who shall remain ticketless, it is not the main attraction. Those who are wise understand only too well that it is Dublin itself that is the greatest treasure.

I may tread on a few toes in Edinburgh and Paris. London is featureless on these occasions, and I will, for obvious reasons of self-interest not mention Cardiff, but Dublin is the fairest city on rugby match days.

It is a city and yet a village. Everybody seems to know one another from the time you sip your early morning coffee at Bewleys to the late drinks at O'Donoghue's, or at the many bars at Kitty O'Shea's. Dublin is *en fête*. Come what may, the

Irish and the Welsh together are never too grim.

Who is it, then, with a few glasses short of a party, that wants to tamper with all this? At the powers that be really in their right minds when they suggest that the five nations' championship should be relegated to the tail-end of the season. The idea is not dead. I am sure. Someone with an eye for the fast buck and a too-efficient sense of practicalities will, one day, want to clear the decks once and for all and let club rugby have its way first. The hand that signs that paper will not tell a city, but will put the five nations' championship to death.

This, though, does not explain it all. On Monday morning, after Wales's game against Scotland, the request for air flight tickets tripled. Yet Wales lost, you hastily add. To which may be suggested — only suggested mind you — that, while winning again is important, the style with which it is achieved is important to Wales, too. Perhaps this is even truer when a team loses. In both defeats so far, Wales have drawn considerable consolation. They are travelling hopefully.

This is not to say, however, that, were Wales to be in with a chance of a grand slam victory at some future date and pursuing their most curmudgeonly style, there would not be a tendency to want it all ways. For the moment, at any rate, since Wales cannot win their matches, the supporters must resign themselves to the pursuit of happiness by other means. Fast, running, handling and enterprising rugby is their key, but Ireland will have a thing or two to say about that.

Clohessy's contract ended by IRFU

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE reality of a professional rugby union career was brought home to Peter Clohessy yesterday. The Ireland right-half, already suspended until December for stamping on Olivier Roumat during the defeat by France on February 17, has also lost his £3,000 match fee, and his playing contract with the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU), which ran until the end of March, was terminated.

"I want to state again my regret about what happened in Paris," Clohessy said. "I fully accept the decision taken by the IRFU. Although it will be frustrating for me, it is my intention to try and keep fit and, as soon as my suspension is complete, to resume playing." However, Clohessy, 30 this month, has a persistent back problem, and his disciplinary record suggests that he will not play again for his country.

Simon Geoghegan confirmed his recovery from a groin strain and will play on the wing for Ireland against

Wales at Lansdowne Road tomorrow. Another wing is not so fortunate. Kenny Logan has withdrawn as a Scotland replacement for the grand slam meeting with England at Murrayfield because of a broken finger. His place will be taken by Cameron Glasgow, of Heriot's F.P. Bryan Redpath, the influential Melrose scrum half, has trained only lightly this week because of muscular spasms in his back, but is expected to play.

England flew to Edinburgh yesterday afternoon expressing appreciation of Scotland's achievements this season. "They are not afraid to try things, like quick restarts," Dean Richards, the pack leader, said. "They are a side prepared to have a go from anywhere and they're quite good at it. Rob Wainwright is an outstanding player."

Richards, restored to No 8 for the first time this season, was less loquacious about his own record against the Scots. In six appearances since 1986, he has yet to finish on the losing side.

Richards's influence will be paramount tomorrow, though Will Carling, the captain, said: "It's more than just Dean and I, though Dean brings experience. He instils confidence in players, but there has been frustration on the pitch as well as off it, particularly in the last quarter against Wales."

"This time it's a different experience for us. There's a lot less pressure, which suits us and probably doesn't suit the Scots — but they are playing very well and thoroughly deserve to be favourites."



Clohessy: apologetic

RADIO CHOICE

Stretching the imagination

Cultural Baggage: Rubber. Radio 3, 9.05pm.

Except for mentioning tortoiseshell condoms in 18th-century Japan. I think I should draw a veil over the sexual content of the eleven of these kaleidoscopic features about modern cultural icons. This still leaves quite a lot that informs and entertains. Did you realise that both the rubber at the end of a lead pencil and the deletion key on a computer indicate a modern inclination to think of words as erasable? Did you know that the domestic rubber plant has nothing to do with the commercially produced stretchy stuff? There is a musical plea for rubber dusters. One line goes: "Not as noisy, they'd find/as the galvanised kind." Not a great lyric, but not a bad idea.

War Requiem. Radio 3, 7.30pm.

It is always a risky business, recommending the whole on the strength of a part. Yet I am doing it for this performance of Britten's choral masterpiece, recorded last year at Glasgow's Mayfest. The only excerpts Radio 3 offered me comprised the *Requiem Aeternam* and the *Dies Irae*. What I deduced from them was that, unless soloists, choirs and orchestra were suddenly stricken by a crippling disease, the remainder of the performance could not be any less glorious. As I listened, I kept thinking what the late William Mann wrote in *The Times* after the *Requiem*'s first performance: "This work is so superbly proportioned... that every performance ought to be a momentous occasion."

Peter Daville

RADIO 1

FM Stereo 4.00am Clive Warren 6.30 Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Lisa Vaneen, incl at 12.30-12.45pm Newsbeat and at 1.15 The Not 2.00 Nicky Campbell 4.00 Mark Goodier, incl at 5.30-5.45 Newsbeat, 6.15 The Not and at 6.30 The Not 7.00 Essential Selection 10.00 John Peel 1.00am Radio 1 Rap Show

RADIO 2

FM Stereo 6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wales Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Ed Dooler 2.00pm Debbie Thrower 3.30 Ed Stewart 5.05 Paul Heaney 7.00 Speaking Volumes 7.30 Friday Night Music 8.30 Listen to the Band 10.00 High Notes and Low Notes 12.05pm Doby Fanweaver with Jazz Notes 1.00am Charles Nove

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme, incl 6.55, 7.55 racing preview 8.35 The Magazine incl Video Review, Euronews and at 11.30 Science News 12.00 Midday with Mar, incl at 12.35pm Moneycheck, and at 1.15 Entertainment News 2.05 Ruzoco on Five, incl at 3.45 Entertainment News 4.00 John Inverdale Nationwide, incl at 5.45 Entertainment News 7.00 News Extra 7.35 Alan Green's Sportstalk 8.35 Off Piste 9.05 American Graffiti 9.35 Stop Press 10.05 Entertainment Superhighway 11.00 Night Extra, incl at 11.15 The Financial World Tonight 12.05am After Hours 2.05 Up All Night, with Richard Daltyn

TALK RADIO

6.00am Sandy Ward 7.00 Simon Bates 10.00 Jonathan King 12.00 Tommy Boyd 2.00pm Anne Rice 4.00 Scott Chisholm 7.00 Sean Bolger 8.00 Moz Dee 10.00 Mike Allen 1.00-4.00am Mike Dickin

WORLD SERVICE

At times in GMT, 5.00am News 5.30 Europe 6.00 News 6.30 Europe 7.00 News 7.15 Off the Shelf 7.30 Legacy of Colonialism 8.00 News 8.10 Faith 8.15 Music Review 9.00 News in German 9.15 Faith 9.45 Sport 10.00 News 10.30 BBC English 10.45 Off the Shelf 11.00 News 11.30 Meridian 12.00 News 12.05pm Business 12.15 Britain Today 12.30 Science 1.00 News 2.00 News 2.05 Outlook 2.30 Multitrack 3.00 News in German 3.15 Music Review 4.00 News 4.15 World Today 4.30 News in German 5.00 Europe 5.30 Business 5.45 Sport 6.00 News 6.30 News in German 7.00 News 7.01 Outlook 7.25 Words of Faith 7.30 Multitrack 8.00 News 8.00 News 8.05 Business 9.15 Britain Today 9.30 People and Events 10.00 Newsweek 10.30 New Europe 10.45 Sports 11.00 News 11.10 Spotlight 11.15 Legacy of Colonialism 11.45 Canary Midnight Newsweek 12.30am From the Week 12.45 Britain Today 1.00 News 1.10 Press Review 1.15 Seven Days 1.30 Japan 1.45 Good Sports 2.00 News 2.30 People and Events 3.00 News 3.15 Sport 3.30 Vintage Chart Show 4.00 Newsweek 4.30 Jazz Now and Then 4.45 Seven Days

CLASSIC FM

4.00am Mark Griffiths 6.00 Nick Bailey 9.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Susan Simons 2.00pm Concerto, Dvorak (Cello Concerto in B minor) 3.00 James Cuck 6.00 Newsnight 6.30 Sonata, Schubert (Moth Sonata in D, Op.44) 7.00 Verdi (Concerto in A minor) 8.00 Concerto Mozart (Serenade in D, K.239, Serenata notturna) 9.00 Mahler (Symphony No. 9) 10.00 Michael Mappin 1.00am Robert Booth

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Russ 'n' Ron 9.00 Richard Skinner 12.00 Graham Dene 4.00pm Nicky Horse 7.30 Paul Coyte 10.00 Mark Forster 2.00-6.00am Pearce

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, Franck (Symphony in D minor); Rossini (Overture obbligata and contrabasso in D); Walton (Sinfonia Prelude and Fugue); Prokofiev (Romeo and Juliet); Verdi (Concerto in A minor) 9.00 Morning Collection, Schubert (String Quartet No 14) Handel (Il cembalo); Dvorak (Wind Serenade in D minor) 10.00 Musical Encounters, Mathias (Santa Fe); Hoddinott (Passaggio); Mozart (Madama Butterfly); Haydn (Piano Trio in G minor) 11.00 Wagner (Dawn and Siegfried's Journey); Siegfried's Funeral Music; Immolation Scene (Mae Hirscher in G minor) 12.00 Composers of the Week: Paris before and after the French Revolution 1.00pm Chamber Music from Manchester, Claudio Concerto performs English music from the time of Henry VIII to Henry VIII 2.00 Schools, Last of Mele's Story 2.15 Music Box 2.30 Dance Workshop 2.50 Poetry Corner 3.00 Mining the Archive, Steven Plastow meets the violinist Norbert Brainin

4.20 By the Waters of Babylon, The Ghazal: language unites Ethiopians and Eritreans living in Nottingham, London (9:45) 4.30 Remembrance: Songs of the Underworld in Eritrean; Shirley introduces more music from the working-class suburbs of Athens 5.00 The Music Machine, with Tommy Pearson 5.15 In Tune, including George Malcolm (Parades); Sate (La Puccini); 6.30 Medardie (Flute Concerto in E minor) 7.30 War Requiem. See Choice 9.05 Cultural Baggage. See Choice 9.25 Hear and Now, Mari-Anthony Turnage (Your Rockaby); Sally Beamish (Shadow and Silver); James MacMillan (Main), Gordon MacPherson (Two Movements from Hand Guns); Penderecki (Clanet Quartet); Janet Beal (Vincent Sonata); Penderecki (String Trio); Gerard Barry (The Conquest of Ireland); Elliott Carter (Variations for Orchestra) 12.00 An American in London, Songs composed by George Gershwin and Richard Rodgers for the West End stage (3:4)

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast (LW only) 6.00 News and Weather 6.10 Farming 6.25 Prayer 6.30 Today, incl 6.30, 7.00, 7.30, 8.00, 8.30 News 6.55, 7.55 Weather 7.25, 8.25 Sport 7.45 Thought for the Day 8.40 Yesterday in Parliament 8.58 Weather 9.00 News 9.05 Desert Island Discs, the surgeon Sir Roy Cairns is the island guide (r) 9.45 Feedback, Clive Dunkley airs listeners' letters 10.00-10.30 News: Foreign Correspondence (FM only) Cape Town (3:5) (r) 10.00 An Act of Worship (LW only) 10.15 This Scepter'd Isle (LW only) 10.30 Woman's Hour, with Ruth Westra 11.30 The Natural History Programme 12.00 News; You and Yours 12.25pm The Food Programme 12.55 Weather 1.00 The World at One 1.40 The Archers (r) 1.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News; Classic Serial: Bonjour Tristesse (r) 3.00 News; The Afternoon Shift 4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope 4.45 Short Story: Reverse for Dennis, by Leslie Norris Read by Simon Probert (r) 5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping Forecast

6.00 News 6.30 Going Places 7.00 News 7.05 The Archers 7.25 Pick of the Week 7.30 Any Questions Jonathan Dimbleby chairs a debate in Aston, Cumbria. The guests are Roger Freeman, MP, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Jimmy Knapp, General Secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, Peter Mandelson, MP, and Baroness Perry of Southwark. President of the Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge 8.50 Law in Action 9.15 Letter from America 9.30 Kaleidoscope Feature, The film-maker Martin Scorsese talks to Paul Gambaccini about his life in and out of the movies (r) 9.59 Weather 10.00 The World Tonight 10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Contractors, Mark Lambert reads the final episode of Insh writer John B. Kane's novel 11.25 Week Ending News satire 11.45 Today in Parliament 12.00 News, incl 12.27am Weather 12.30 The Late Book: Players, by Don DeLillo (10:10) 12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6. LW 198; MW 220. RADIO 5. FM 95.3, 95.9. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100.1-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO UK. MW 1053, 1085. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Gillian Massey, Rosemary Smith and Susan Thomson

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 36

LATREDE

(b) To be latrede is to be slow or tardy. From the Old English *laet* late + *raed* counsel. Chaucer stated: "When a man is so latrede or tarrying or he will come to god".

LOGGIA

(c) A gallery or arcade having one or more of its sides open to the air. From the Italian *logggia* meaning lodge. H. Walpole stated: "This mansion was much improved by Sir Francis Bacon, who added Italian porticoes, and loggias".

MASSOOLAH

(a) A large surf-boat used for conveying passengers and goods between ships and the shore on the Coromandel coast. Hodges of *Travelling India* fame describes it as "A boat of the country called a Massoolah boat".

MIRYACHIT

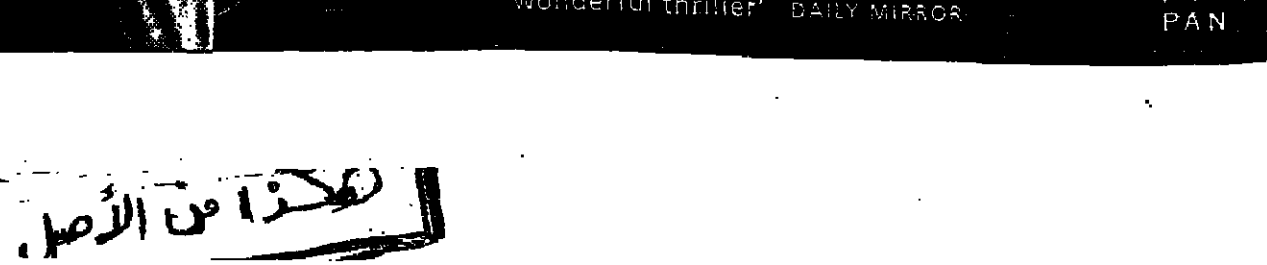
(c) A peculiar nervous disease found in Siberia and Eastern Europe. The patients' main characteristic is to mimic everything that is said or done by another person. From the Russian word meaning to be epileptic.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Nc6+ Rxe8; 2. Qf6+ Kxg8; 3. Qxe6+ and the rook on d7 goes, leaving Black with a hopeless position.

SELFISH. GREEDY. CORRUPT.
TOP NAMES FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT ELITE.
DEAD!
ONE A WEEK. EVERY SUNDAY.
They cheat the people. They lie to Parliament. One man has had enough.

Fiction that could be fact
SABBATHMAN
GRAHAM HURLEY
A thriller writer for the nineties
As good a read as you'll ever get... a wonderful, wonderful thriller! DAILY MIRROR



Africans enjoy finest hour to leave former World Cup winners struggling to qualify

Unsung Kenya humiliate West Indies

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON
IN PUNE, INDIAPUNE (West Indies won toss):
Kenya (2pts) beat West Indies
by 73 runs

KENYA achieved one of the greatest victories in the history of cricket, indeed of competitive team sport, when they beat West Indies at the Nehru Stadium here yesterday. The winning margin of 73 runs left little room for excuses and Richie Richardson, the vanquished captain, offered none. Like everyone else, he was speechless, and when he returns home to Antigua, he will be jobless.

First, it is imperative to praise the Kenyans. For a team of club cricketers to overwhelm a Test side, even one in sad and palpable decline, is a feat that beggars belief. They lost the toss, and half



Leading article 17
Cronje inspires 36

their wickets for 77, and they still lashed West Indies.

If ever there was a reward for virtue over self-interest, this was it. Kenya have made plenty of friends in this World Cup with the generosity of their play and their cheerful demeanour. After the game, they skipped around the ground like children who had been let out of school, brandishing their spoils of war — two sets of stumps — at a crowd that shared their delight.

The West Indians, as if infected by their shame, hid behind the curtains of the dressing-room. They have made few friends, and the reason is plain. Their minds are elsewhere, and they wish their bodies were. This was a disgraceful performance, and the consequences will vibrate throughout the Caribbean for some time.

Test teams have lost World Cup matches in the past to associate members of the International Cricket Council, but never so abjectly. Sri Lanka beat India in Manchester in 1979, and Zimbabwe



The Kenyans, from left, Iqbal, Odumbe, Karim and Modi, celebrate their momentous victory yesterday, leaving Lara, right, and his West Indies colleagues to contemplate elimination. Photographs: Kamal Kishore

recorded a notable triumph against Australia at Trent Bridge four years later. To be bowled out for 93, and for only two players to reach double figures, will give the West Indies cricket board a much-needed opportunity for some sober analysis. This is a team without a heart.

When Richardson finally emerged, it was to congratulate Kenya and say: "I have no words right now." Wes Hall, the team manager, led a group of players into the Kenya dressing-room, where they posed for photographs among opponents who revere them. "The West Indies are my heroes," Maurice Odumbe, the Kenya captain, said.

One would expect nothing

else from Richardson and Hall, who are gracious men. Brian Lara, who is not particularly gracious, was there, too, to accept the hand of Rajab Ali, the man who dismissed him. Lara's eyes, which normally light up in dollar signs, were blank.

From the first ball of the match, there was something desultory about the West Indies display, and it was not long before their cricket betrayed unmistakable signs of disaffection. That Richardson no longer enjoys the loyalty of the men under him was plain to see. He stood isolated, like a single star on a cloudless night. It was shameful, and pitiful to see.

How can one account rationally for this unspeakable mess? Ambrose conceded two boundaries in his first over. Walsh was twice belted down the ground by Tikolo, who also pulled him for six as if he were a club bowler. All told, West Indies conceded 16 wickets and 13 no-balls. Harper, once the most wonderful of

KENYA		WEST INDIES	
D Chudasama c Lara b Walsh	16	S C Campbell c Suji	4
Tariq Iqbal c Cully b Walsh	16	*R B Richardson b Rajab Ali	5
H O'Brien c Adams b Walsh	2	B C Lara c Tariq Iqbal b Rajab Ali	8
S Tikolo c Adams b Harper	29	S Chandrapaul c Tikolo b M Odumbe	19
*M Odumbe 1st wicket b Bishop	6	K J Arthurton run out	0
H Modi c Adams b Ambrose	26	N J C Adams c Modi b M Odumbe	9
M Suji c Lara b Harper	10	R A Harper c Tariq Iqbal b M Odumbe	17
T O'Donoghue c Adams b Harper	24	I R Bishop not out	5
E Odumbe c Cully	11	C E L Ambrose not out	3
Asif Karim c Adams b Ambrose	11	C A Walsh c Chudasama b Asif Karim	4
Rajab Ali not out	8	C E Cully b Rajab Ali	1
Extras (lb 5, lb 6, lb 13)	37	Extras (lb 5, lb 6, lb 4, lb 2)	17
Total (16.2 overs)	168	Total (35.2 overs)	93
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-15, 2-19, 3-45, 4-72, 5-77, 6-81, 7-125, 8-128, 9-155		FALL OF WICKETS: 1-18, 2-22, 3-33, 4-35, 5-55, 6-55, 7-78, 8-81, 9-89	
BOWLING: Ambrose 8.5-21-2; Walsh 9-0-46-3; Bishop 10-2-30-1; Cully 8-0-31-1; Harper 10-4-15-3; Arthurton 4-0-15-0		BOWLING: Suji 7.2-15-1; Rajab Ali 7.2-2-13-3; Asif Karim 6.1-19-1; M Odumbe 10-3-15-3; O'Donoghue 3-0-15-0	
Umpires: V K Rameswamy and Khizer Hayat		Man of the match: M Odumbe	

fielders, dropped two catches and knocked up another.

Their batting was even worse. Campbell was bowled behind his legs. Chandrapaul carved a long hop to backward point. Arthurton failed to complete a run that existed only in his addled mind, and Lara threw away his wicket like a spoilt child. Only Adams could be exonerated.

Lara's brief, woeful innings

is worth noting. He faced 11 balls, hit the first for four, came within a rice-paper of edging two more, when he wafted his bat outside the off stump, and would have been run out if Modi had hit from extra cover. Waving his bat a third time, Lara presented Iqbal with the simplest of catches, and Ali with the second of his three wickets.

If Hall had sent his star

batsman home to Trinidad there and then, Lara could have had no cause for complaint. There is absolutely nothing about his conduct to suggest, as his one-eyed admirers do, that he is cut out for the captaincy when Richardson leaves the post.

"I felt they were a bit complacent from that first over by Ambrose," Hanuman Singh, the former India Test player who coaches Kenya, said, "but our only hope of winning was to get Lara early, and you could say he contributed to that end."

Odumbe, named man of the match for his captaincy and his three wickets, said: "We have now proved we can play. To us, this was like winning the World Cup itself." Their smiles brightened the day and, as they sang afterwards, they intended to make it "a night to remember."

Odumbe's contribution turned the game irrevocably towards Kenya. Well though Rajab Ali and Suji bowled at the start of the innings, when

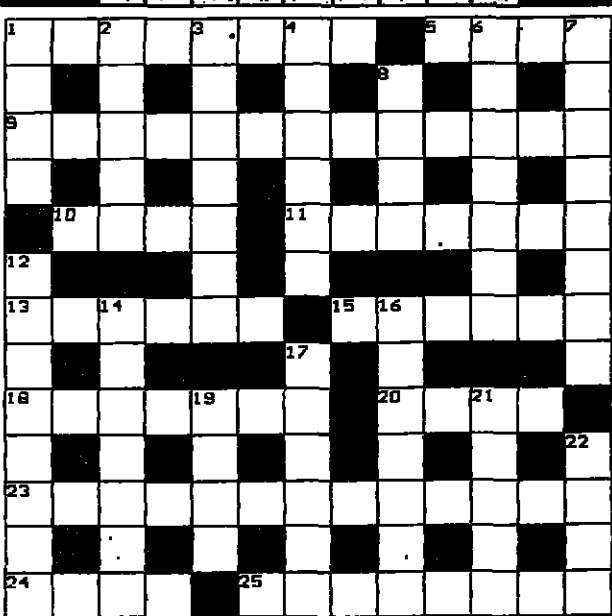
West Indies lost four wickets for 35, there was always the danger that Chandrapaul and Adams would carry the torch. Odumbe bowled his off spinners right through, conceding only 15 runs as well as removing Chandrapaul, Adams and Harper.

To be sure of reaching the knockout stage, West Indies must now beat Australia in Jaipur on Monday. In their present state, reduced to bickering incompetence, victory is beyond them. Far more likely is another humiliating defeat. Their cricket is most accurately reflected by the ever-sullen Ambrose, whose lack of grace is an affront to the sport. If they finish their group matches with only two points, along

with Kenya and Zimbabwe, their run-rate may not be good enough to prevent one of the others progressing at their expense. Frankly, Kenya are more worthy of a place.

West Indies, the winners in 1975 and 1979 and runners-up in 1983, failed to qualify for the knockout stages of each of the past two World Cups. They should prepare straight away for an unpleasant reception in the Caribbean. Italy's footballers were pelted with rotten tomatoes in 1966 after losing a World Cup match to North Korea at Middlesbrough. There is no saying what angry West Indian cricket-lovers will get up to, but their fallen cricketers are about to find out.

TWO CROSSWORD



No 718

ACROSS

- Slow, time-wasting (8)
- Irritation, restless longing (4)
- Perquisite (6, 7)
- Greek philosopher, made paradoxes (4)
- Most honourable (7)
- Stir up (6)
- (Divided) making two equal shares (2, 4)
- He pounds: Erasmus (anag.) (7)
- Male fowl (4)
- Very tempting (food) (5-8)
- Christmas (in carols) (4)
- In level-headed fashion (8)

DOWN

- Take off (cap) (4)
- River through Orleans (5)
- Towing vessel (7)
- Peter Paul —, Flemish artist (6)
- Lustrous fine silk (7)
- Exciting, attractive person/thing (3, 5)
- Round handle (4)
- Stealer of ship (8)
- Set of (special) clothes (7)
- Central part (of cell, atom) (7)
- Esoteric (6)
- Greek nymph: resound (4)
- Ascend (5)
- Nasty-looking (4)

The solution to 717 will be published Wednesday, March 6

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Lever's recruits surprise world

Simon Wilde on the deeds of a country poor in opportunity but rich in ambition

There are many remarkable aspects to Kenya's cricketing triumph yesterday. The country possesses only 12 grass pitches, a mere 300 regular players and no resident professionals, and the match yesterday was only their fourth one-day international; but the most remarkable thing was that it was their bowlers who made it possible.

"I thought that they might cause an upset, but that, if they did, it would be the batsmen chasing a total rather than the bowlers defending one," Peter Lever, the former Lancashire and England bowler who helped Kenya to prepare for the World Cup, said yesterday. "Their experience is in the batting. Many of the bowlers are young and totally inexperienced."

Lever was specifically employed to train these raw recruits. "Rajab Ali will love getting out Lara," he said. "He's a really shy boy. His head used to go down if someone slapped him for four, but I tried to teach him to take a broader view. He is deceptively quick and can dart the ball in."

"Martin Suji has a beautiful run-up and action and, if he had a better diet, could bowl very fast; but all he eats is maize and flour: he does not get enough protein. As for Maurice Odumbe, he cannot bowl at all..." — Lever chuckles at the thought that Odumbe has bowled ten overs for three wickets and only 15 runs — "...I've seen him get whacked a few times."

Lever equates the standard of Kenya's cricket as the

equivalent of a good Minor Counties side. "The difference is that Kenya have greater flair and prepared in a very concentrated way for the World Cup. Each week, they practised for four nights, played one practice match and one league match. I also took out a couple of videos of the West Indies, but I am not sure seeing them encouraged them much."

Kenya's only professional player is Steve Tikolo, who top-scored yesterday. He plies his trade in South Africa, where he is the overseas player for Border.

Cricket dates back 80 years

KENYA'S FINE BLEND

Maurice Odumbe
Age: 25. Club: Aga Khan.
Occupation: Insurance salesman.
Captain, right-hand batsman, off spinner. Played league cricket for Nairobi.
Dipak Chudasama
Age: 32. Club: Nairobi Gymkhana.
Occupation: Dentist.
Right-hand opening batsman.
Kenedy Oduro
Age: 23. Club: Aga Khan.
Occupation: Salesman.
Right-hand batsman, off spinner, fine fielder.
Tariq Iqbal
Age: 32. Club: Swamibapa Sports.
Occupation: Professional cricketer.
Right-hand batsman, off spinner, plays for South African province Border.
Hitesh Modi
Age: 24. Club: Nairobi Gymkhana.
Occupation: Salesman.
Left-hand batsman, off spinner, fine fielder.

Edward Odumbe
Age: 30. Club: Aga Khan.
Occupation: Salesman.
Right-hand batsman, right-arm medium pace bowler. Former captain.
Martin Suji
Age: 24. Club: Aga Khan.
Occupation: Student.
Right-hand batsman, right-arm fast medium bowler, good fielder. Former professional with Trinidad.
Thomas Oduro
Age: 17. Club: Nairobi Gymkhana.
Occupation: High school student.
Youngest player in World Cup, right-hand batsman, right-arm fast bowler, brilliant fielder.
Rajab Ali
Age: 30. Club: Simba Union.
Occupation: Salesman.
Right-hand batsman, right-arm fast medium bowler.
Asif Karim
Age: 32. Club: Jaffery Sports.
Occupation: Insurance broker.
Right-hand batsman, left-arm spinner. Has captained Kenya at cricket and tennis in the Davis Cup.



Lever: pleased for his bowling pupils

game and the World Cup party contains eight Africans and six Indians.

Standards have risen with the recent introduction of turf pitches and the paternalistic interest taken by South Africa, who have sent several provincial teams to play there. Even so, the team left for the World Cup in some disarray after the players demanded — but failed to receive — a bowling machine and allowances of \$80 (about £50) a day.

Lever expected the Kenyans — whose ambition is to be granted Test status within the next five years — to enjoy their conquest to the full. "They will love it," he said. "One or two of them will have a drink, including Maurice (Odumbe) and Hari Shah, but several are Muslims and teetotal; but they love to stamp their feet and are great singers. I'm so pleased for them. I can hardly believe it. This must be the biggest upset in cricket since Ireland beat West Indies in the Sixties."

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